# VALLEY VOICE

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# Tulare County Employees Pursue Audit of County Finances

**Catherine Doe**

Tulare County employees conduct a protest outside the Board of Supervisors chambers.

Tulare County employees turned up the heat last week on the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (BOS), conducting a protest march outside the council chambers and taking their message to Sacramento.

During a special evening session of the Tulare County BOS on June 24th, the Service Employee International Union (SEIU) Local 521 organized a march highlighting the stalled negotiations in the workers' contracts. More than 70 employees and concerned citizens marched and sang outside of the supervisors' chambers before filing inside for the meeting. The message is spreading throughout the area as several high-profile community leaders were in attendance. Sam Aguilera-Marrero, the congressional candidate challenging Devin Nunes for the 22nd District, was there to give her support. Rosaena Sanchez, former Lindsay mayor and current city council member, and Greg Gomez, vice mayor of Farmersville were also there supporting the workers.

During public comment, Tulare County employees came up individually to give personal testimony about their hardships; five of them, one for each county district, delivered each supervisor a stack of petitions. One of the last people to comment was Kathy Ninneman. She said that she came two years ago to speak about the raises the BOS gave themselves. "And I'm here to talk to you again," Ninneman said. "It's not fair that you gave yourself a raise while giving the employees nothing. It's very disappointing as a citizen and we all vote."

At issue are the workers' contracts. The SEIU is asking for a three-year contract with an 8.74% raise. Their request is based on the board of supervisor's pay raise during the last two years of 8.98%. The county has countered with a one-year contract and a 0% raise. The rank-and-file Tulare County employees have not received a raise since 2008, while some in management have received several.

The morning after the BOS meeting, a small group of Tulare County employees on the negotiating team took a van to Sacramento to meet with local

**AUDIT** continued on **10 »**

The planned Fire Station 53 in southwest Visalia.

## New Southwest Visalia Fire Station Gets Green Light for Early 2015 Construction

**Staff Reports**

The Visalia City Council approved the configuration and preferred building elevation for the new Fire Station 53 to be built at the southeast corner of Atwood and Walnut Avenue.

The 7,000-square-foot facility is estimated to cost a total of $3.24 million, which will be funded through Measure T, the quarter-cent sales tax measure approved by voters. The budget includes land acquisition, onsite and offsite construction improvements, project management, design costs and low-water-use landscaping.

The preferred building elevation, pictured above, reduces the building size from the floor plan of Fire Station 55 at Shirk and Ferguson. The project went before the City's Site Plan Review Committee on June 18 and received a "revise and proceed" with conditions of approval for going forward with the project.

The preferred building elevation was one of three developed by the architect with RRM Design Group. Staff conducted extensive outreach, including a public meeting on May 27. While the current zoning for the site is residential, a fire station is allowed in this zone as a conditional use. A conditional use permit allows the city to consider special uses that may be essential or desirable to the community and provides flexibility within a zoning ordinance.

Bidding for the construction of the project is expected in late October, with an anticipated award of the contract in December. Construction is slated to begin in early 2015.

## Visalia City Council Approves Balanced Budget

**Catherine Doe**

For a second consecutive year, Visalia will have a balanced budget. On Thursday, June 26th, the Visalia City Council held a special meeting to review and approve the city's budget for fiscal years 2014-15 and 2015-16. After Amy Sing and Renee Nagel, from the finance department, presented the budget council, members took turns sharing their own thoughts about the state of Visalia's finances. The council had already been briefed during two prior work sessions, June 2nd and June 16th, so there were no public comments or questions.

Visalia's budget for fiscal year 2014-15 is $231 million. For fiscal year 2015-16 it is $199 million. Just for comparison, Gov. Jerry Brown just signed California's budget that came in on time at $108 billion.

All council members expressed their gratitude towards the finance department for putting together a balanced budget and focusing on rebuilding the organization. They were relieved to be rehiring staff after the Great Recession and thrilled that the city was putting $1.6 million into the rainy day fund. That would bring Visalia's reserve up to a projected $6.9 million. Mayor Steve Nelsen said that Fresno was doing cartwheels just to be able to finally have a balanced budget and restart its contingency fund, while Visalia has added to its existing fund for two years. Council Member Greg Collins pointed out that he stays up to date with what's going on in other valley towns such as Modesto and Bakersfield. "Visalia is in a really good financial position while everyone else is struggling."

Both Council Member Bob Link and Mayor Nelsen thought that the finance staff was overly conservative with their projections and that Visalia would collect significantly more in sales tax than what the staff budgeted for. At the budget midterm review in March 2015, Nelsen is planning on expanding on projects they have already started if tax revenue is higher than projected.

After all the praise, council members made suggestions about what projects should be pursued in the coming years. Collins, Council Member Warren Gubler and Nelsen expressed a desire for an Aquatic Center to be built on the south side of town. Collins preferred the money that might go into a park around the Modoc Basin be spent on a community pool. Both he and Nelsen thought it wise to get community input now and possibly start building in 2017.

The biggest complaint about the budget came from Council Members Amy Shuklian and Collins. They objected to the huge amount of

**BUDGET** continued on **10 »**

## El Niño Predicted... But Only a 'Moderate' One

**Steve Pastis**

The National Weather Service (NWS) is predicting an El Niño for later this year, but don't expect it to end our drought – or even have much of an impact. The NWS has called for a "moderate" El Niño Watch, which means it is unlikely to significantly change our rainfall.

"I would say it does not guarantee any end to the drought," said Steve Mendenhall, the meteorologist in charge of the San Joaquin Office of the National

**EL NIÑO** continued on **4 »**

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

# All Tied-up in Naughts

As it does every four years, the World Cup has created quite a soccer uproar. In a camaraderie of beer and jerseys and face paint, strangers band together in bars everywhere to cheer. I have been left scratching my head--with hands that could not be used in a match--about the game itself. Not about its global popularity. It makes perfect sense that a sport would be almost universally beloved wherein one of the signature characteristics of our species--the human hand--is specifically disallowed. By this reasoning, soccer could only be improved upon by having to play it, say, blindfolded. Soccer is idiotic. But it's also a heck of a lot of fun. Still, I find myself stymied by some of the rules.

I last played nearly 40 years ago, in middle school, and what was considered a clean tackle then now seems to be a foul. In those days, a defender could approach the ball controller from any point save directly behind and, providing only the ball was contacted in a sliding move, it was deemed fair play. I have lost count of how many times I've seen this--slow-motion showing the defender's foot clearly and cleanly touching only the ball--called a foul after the offensive player collapsed in a heap to the turf of the pitch. Offside still seems straightforward enough. And out of bounds is still not called or a goal tallied until the ball has completely crossed either the touch or goal line, respectively. Corners, crosses and clearances? Check, check and check. So far, so good: all the mechanics of the game--with the exception of tackling--remain as I remember them.

But I don't remember any ties. Ever. That a match could result in a tie is, simply, moronic. Pregame shenanigans notwithstanding, soccer hooliganism is a bit more understandable after something like a tie. Let me tell you, if I were so emotionally invested as some of these fans, it would drive me crazy as well.

For what possible reason is a tie even allowed? I am baffled. After 90 non-stop minutes of pure exertion, followed by whatever injury time is mysteriously added, players and fans alike are expected to shrug their shoulders and pack it in? It's absurd. Especially when the match could so easily be decided by a penalty kick shoot-out. I have seen it done. I have participated in several of them myself.

In this year's incarnation of the World Cup, the United States thus far has beat Ghana, tied Portugal, and lost to Germany. And this has been sufficient to advance the United States to the knock-out round, where a penalty kick shoot-out actually can decide a match. But allowing for tie games in the first round makes the scoring of goals--offense--paramount. The *New York Times* reports that a record 136 goals were netted in the Cup's opening round. This makes about as much sense as the American League's cynical 1973 decision to pencil a Designated Hitter into the line-up. It has always seemed to me that real baseball was sacrificed then, to lucre itself, in a naked attempt to foster batting and therefore bolster ticket sales--because the game would be more "exciting" if more runs, in particular home runs, were generated. Offense.

Is this what soccer is crying out for? How can such a wildly--and globally--popular sport stoop to this accursed depth? Again, I am baffled. Soccer and baseball both, by their natures, are low-scoring sports. But does any true fan find a no-hitter dull? A scoreless soccer match, provided it would be settled in a shoot-out, is, as a no-hitter, a magnificent thing. I'll tell you what dull is: a tie. In any sport, no matter how exciting or not the contesting of it is, opponents always strive to emerge victorious. Fans demand a win or, in the worst case scenario that is a loss, closure. A tie is neither. A tie is, honestly, a waste of time. Even the American League recognizes that success must be measured by wins. It's why they didn't do away with extra innings.

Think of goals as analogous to home runs. And because I'm a fan, let's take as an example the San Francisco Giants, who moved to the City in 1958. It took until 2010, 52 years, for the SF Giants to win their first World Series. That season, the Giants hit 162 home runs, twelve better than the league average. When they repeated in 2012, the Giants hit a paltry 103; that year, the league average was 152. The team the Giants beat in the Series, the Detroit Tigers, belted 163. Yet in 2001, when the Giants lead the National League in home runs with 235, they failed to make the playoffs. Home runs don't always decide ballgames, but few things in sports are more exciting; shoot-outs must be among them--precisely because they are decisive.

Only once have I ever actually hoped for a tie: Friday, November 28, 1975. In the Los Angeles Coliseum that evening, USC hosted UCLA in the season's final game. A USC victory--or a tie--would finally have put my Bears into the Rose Bowl. But when USC coach John McKay--trying to leave college football with a crowning win before his retirement--chose to go for a last-second touchdown instead of a game-tying field goal, he and his Trojans were defeated. And in those days, ties were allowed.

— *Joseph Oldenbourg*

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**Publisher/Editor**: Joseph Oldenbourg
joseph@ourvalleyvoice.com

**Associate Editor/Sales**: Steve Pastis (steve@ourvalleyvoice.com)

**Staff**:
Catherine Doe, writer (catherine@ourvalleyvoice.com)
Tony Maldonado, webmaster (tony@ourvalleyvoice.com)
April Heath Pastis, writer (april@ourvalleyvoice.com)
Louie Luna, sales (louie@ourvalleyvoice.com)

**Contact us & share your opinion**
www.ourvalleyvoice.com
208 W. Main St., Ste. E • Visalia, CA 93291

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# Political Fix

Catherine Doe

## Pete McCracken – More than a City Council Member

It was a sad day in Porterville when Renaissance Man, Pete McCracken, passed away June 21st. Mr. McCracken had just been re-elected to his third term on the Porterville City Council.

Being on the city council, and having served as mayor, were just two of Mr. McCracken's accomplishments. According to the *Fresno Bee*, in the 1970s and 1980s he consulted for the World Bank on agricultural issues in Portugal, Jordan, Egypt, Thailand and Yemen. For about three years, he managed a 24,000-acre farm in Yemen and apparently spoke Arabic. Locally, he and his wife owned a Western dance studio and enjoyed dancing themselves. He and his wife also opened a restaurant that served French and American food, where Mr. McCracken was the chef. He was a veteran, having served his country as an Army Specialist from 1965 to 1967.

As the city's vice mayor, Mr. McCracken supported former Mayor Virginia Gurrola when she attempted to pass a proclamation last year identifying June as LGBT Pride Month. For her efforts, the city council removed Ms. Gurrola as mayor, further removing Mr. McCracken as vice-mayor, and replacing them with city councilmembers Cameron Hamilton and Brian Ward. Mr. McCracken felt that he and the mayor did nothing wrong and that he was voted out of his position on the board because he supported Ms. Gurrola.

Apparently, the voters of Porterville didn't think he did anything wrong, either, as they voted him back into office.

A week after the primary, Mr. McCracken was discharged from the hospital and had actually participated in the June 17th council meeting by phone in order to pass a new budget. He died three days later.

According to the Porterville City Charter, the city council has 30 days to fill the vacancy. If one candidate cannot get a majority of the votes, then the mayor can appoint Mr. McCracken's replacement. According to the *Porterville Recorder*, councilmember Gurrola said, "I'd want someone in that position who has been involved in their community and will do their best for the city." Unless some councilmembers start playing politics, that person is Matt Green, who took a commanding third place and is committed to public service in Porterville. Mr. Green might have even won if the general public knew that Mr. McCracken had suffered a mild heart attack shortly after Memorial Day. The Porterville City Council will be discussing their options at Tuesday's meeting, which happens after press time.

The new appointee will hold the seat until November of 2016, as Porterville voters just changed their city council elections from June to November. An interesting twist will be if the city gets sued and has to change to district elections. In November 2016, three seats will be a full four-year term and one will only be a two-year term. How they figure which district will be saddled with the two-year term should be interesting.

## Devin Nunes Has Bigger Fish to Fry

Just to keep everything straight: the Speaker of the House is John Boehner, R-Ohio, the House Majority Leader was Eric Cantor, R-Kentucky, and now is Kevin McCarthy, R-California. The House Majority whip was Rep. McCarthy and now is Rep. Steve Scalise of Louisiana. Rep. McCarthy is the first lawmaker from the Central Valley to hold the number-two spot in Congress.

So where is Rep. Devin Nunes in all this? Rep. Nunes is much better-known than Rep. McCarthy, and is much more active in making policy and putting forth legislation. Why doesn't he have the number-two spot?

Many times on the news we have seen Rep. McCarthy standing alongside Rep. Cantor and Rep. Boehner during a press release or announcement, yet personally I never knew who he was. I was shocked to learn that, as a resident of Lemon Cove, not only was he my representative but he furthermore held the third-highest position in Congress.

They say that Rep. McCarthy is stronger on politics than policy, which is true. Last year, when trying to get Rep. McCarthy's position on immigration for an article, it took five emails for his spokesperson, a Mr. Fong, to finally give me an intelligible response, if you could call it that. His position, at that time, was that he had no position, but will in the future. In the ensuing months the most controversial issue that Rep. McCarthy took a stand on was the West Nile Virus. He's against it.

Congressional Republicans' biggest beef with electing Rep. McCarthy as the Majority Leader was the fact that he comes from California--you know, the same state as Governor Moon Beam. No such stigma has weighed down Rep. Nunes, who has earned his conservative chops by not just talking the talk, but by walking the walk. Because of his work in Congress he is on the House Ways and Means Committee and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Now Rep. Nunes has made it clear he wants to be considered the successor to the Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence after the retirement of current chairman, Rep. Mike Rogers, R-Michigan. According to Professor Nathan Moore of the University of California, Merced, as stated in the *Visalia Times-Delta*, "It could signal a desire to eventually make a move to the executive branch, as a cabinet secretary or head of one of the intelligence agencies, or even a run for the Senate."

Ultimately, each of our local representatives is where they are supposed to be. You can't have the House Majority Leader calling his colleagues "lemmings in suicide vests." And you can't have someone unwilling to take a stand as the Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Conveniently for Rep. Nunes, House Speaker John Boehner has the authority to select the next Chair of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and guess who now has his ear?

## A Debate to Forget

The *Sacramento Bee*, along with other media outlets, invited Gov. Jerry Brown and Neel Kashkari, to debate this fall. The same media group sponsored a debate between Gov. Brown and Republican Meg Whitman in 2010 that drew an estimated 2 million viewers.

According to the *Sacramento Bee*, "Kashkari has called for 10 debates… On Friday, he accepted the invitation from the Sacramento group. Pat Melton, Kashkari's campaign manager, said in an email that 'it is critical for voters to hear directly from both candidates about their plans to address the big challenges facing our state.'"

Anyone feel a big yawn coming on? What do they really have to debate? California's recently signed budget, about which Mr. Kahskari has found little to criticize? Realignment? That was forced on Gov. Brown because of the inhumane overcrowding of our prisons. The $11.1 billion water bond that Gov. Brown wants to reduce to $6 billion?

In Mr. Kashkari's only televised ad during the primary, he criticized Gov. Brown's pet project, the High-Speed Rail (HSR). Recent polling shows that voters have changed their minds about building HSR, but not so much to get anyone excited, unless you live in Kings County. Besides, there is much unspoken support for HSR. Rich people want to be able to get on a train and catch a matinee in San Francisco then make it home for dinner. Poor people would like to have high-quality jobs with a comfortable retirement that the most vocal and loudest critics of the train already enjoy.

Both candidates really meet in the middle, and besides HSR, Mr. Kashkari doesn't have that wedge issue to motivate voters to go to the polls. He needs to use his time in the spotlight to shore up his standing for the 2018 election. He could be the Republican counterpart to the Brown legacy. Gov. Brown's father, Pat Brown, was a two-term governor and well liked by Republicans. In his old age, Gov. Jerry Brown has made many Republican friends.

Four years is a long time to go without saying something stupid to ruin your chances for the next election cycle. Take Hilary, for example: The more we hear, the less we like her. But Mr. Kashkari is a moderate who stays true to his beliefs. Because he doesn't pander to the cheap seats of the Republican right, he won't have to spend 2018 back-peddling statements made in the previous years

Two million viewers? I don't think so. This debate season won't create the same buzz or friction that existed in 2010 between Queen Meg and Gov. Brown, But Mr. Kashkari may still walk off the stage a winner.

## A Paradigm Change

Does anyone out there think Mississippi is poor and backwards? Well, if California splits into six states, the Central Valley will take over Mississippi's spot as the poorest state in the nation. Comforting isn't it?

An initiative that would split California into six states will be on the ballot in November but will never become a reality. Yet this initiative has highlighted an uncomfortable and acceptable segregation in our golden state.

I remember when a friend in college said that agriculture-based economies are screwed. I said, "Really..." and he laughed at my ignorance, which wasn't an uncommon occurrence as a university student coming from a fairly sheltered life in Visalia. Just like an undeveloped country, Tulare County's economy overly relies on agriculture, which is a huge local employer, but pays so little that most agriculture workers could--ironically-- qualify for food stamps.

Poverty and high unemployment were a problem in Tulare County before Assemblywoman Connie Conway was even a Supervisor. They were problems before Rep. Devin Nunes and Rep. David Valadao were even born. But when their overshadowed critics say we need a change in leadership, it's the Six California's initiative that has brought their reasons why to light.

The Fresno-based Central Valley Business Incubator (CVBI) asked the question, "Does the Valley have the talent to sustain high-tech business?" The answer was a resounding, "Yes." The CVBI stated that the Valley has "the talent, the role models and the capital founders needed for technology ventures in our area to succeed."

We need our local leaders to lead this county out of our internal third-world status. Tulare County needs an affordable four-year university and more industrial jobs, such as the ones offered by HSR. If our leaders think that the HSR will cost too much, for too few jobs, then they should have already brought other industries in to take its place. With the Valley's affordable cost of living, we should be overrun by high-tech companies and factories, and our economy not overwhelmingly related to agriculture.

Let's leave last place to Mississippi and make a paradigm change here.

## A Layman's Rant about the Middle East

When you start pining for the days of Saddam Hussein and Bashar Assad, and the stability they used to bring to the region, you know the situation has gone from bad to worse. Israel has conducted airstrikes inside of Syria. Syria has warplanes bombing Iraq, and Iran is fighting the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) entrenched along the border. ISIS has carved out the border area of Syria and Iraq, claiming a new militant Islamist state, or caliphate. Al Qaida actually kicked ISIS out of their club because they were too extreme. All this warfare is because Muslims can't agree on the legitimate heirs of Mohamed, so of course the only reasonable answer is to kill each other.

Now President Obama finally wants to arm the moderate Syrian rebels. He has wanted to do this for months but has had a hard time discerning what exactly constitutes a moderate Syrian rebel. The expectation is that these rebels will topple Mr. Assad and defeat ISIS. Really? The rebels can barely find their ass with both hands and yet they are supposed to do what Iran, the United States, Iraq and Syria combined have not been able to do? And what happens when our "vetted" rebels abandon their post, drop their United States-supplied arms, and run home--leaving our weapons in the hands of ISIS? How is everyone going to feel about arming the rebels then?

**POLITICAL FIX** continued on **9 »**

# New TCAG Chair and Vice Chair Begin Two-Year Terms

**Staff Reports**

The new leadership of Tulare County Association of Governments started their two-year terms on Tuesday. Tulare County Supervisor Phil Cox is the new board chair, and Tulare City Council Member Craig Vejvoda is the new vice chair. Both were unanimously selected at the May 19th meeting of the TCAG Board.

Supervisor Cox is a lifelong Visalia resident. He attended College of the Sequoias, and has owned and operated C & C Construction since 1985. Before being elected to the board of supervisors in 2004, he served on the North Visalia Advisory Committee (1991-1998); was a member of the Visalia City Planning Commission (1998-2001) and served as a Visalia City Council member (elected 2001). Cox served as Visalia's vice mayor from 2004-2005. He was re-elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2012.

Cox represents the board of supervisors on the Tulare County Employee's Retirement Association. He is also chairman of the Tulare County Association of Governments, the California State Association of Counties' Administration of Justice Committee, and serves on the Tulare County First 5 Commission. He serves on several local and statewide committees including the Consolidated Waste Management Authority, and is the board of supervisors' representative on the Tulare County Gang Prevention Task Force.

"Working with TCAG has been one of the most rewarding experiences I have had as an elected official," said Cox. "The next two years, as we work on and implement the next phase of Measure R, will set the pace for the next six to ten years of road construction and clean air projects in Tulare County. Measure R is a true success story and proof that each and every vote counts in local elections and that as we take control of our tax dollars at the local level we can accomplish great improvements and be proud of what we are doing as elected leaders joined in a common cause."

Phil Cox

Craig Vejvoda

Council Member Vejvoda is a lifelong Tulare resident. He attended COS where he was the ASB president in 1977 and 1978, before going on to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration from Humboldt State in 1980 and a master's degree in financial services from the American College. He has owned and operated Vejvoda Insurance and Financial Services since 1983. Before being elected to the Tulare City Council in 2004, he served as president of the Tulare Jaycees in 1984, as president of the Estate Planning Council of Tulare-Kings Counties in 1987, as president of the Kiwanis Club of Greater Tulare in 1992, as president of the Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors Sequoia Chapter and as president of the Society of Financial Service Professionals, Fresno Chapter.

As a member of the Tulare City Council, Vejvoda served as the chairman for the Tulare Relay for Life in 2005, the co-chair for the Tulare Community Blood Drive from 2005 to 2007, mayor of Tulare from 2006 to 2010 and a board member for the COS Foundation and Boys and Girls Club from 2006 to 2012.

Vejvoda currently serves as the vice mayor of the City of Tulare, co-chair of the Tulare Prayer Breakfast, vice chair of the Tulare County EDC, board member of the Tulare Downtown Association and Central California Blood Center, and a member of the Tulare Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club. He is also the immediate past president of the South San Joaquin Division of the League of California Cities.

The next two years at TCAG will likely see the completion of a Countywide Long Range Transit Plan, a Comprehensive Bicycle/Active Transportation Plan, an updated Measure R Strategic Work Plan, several individual transit plans, a transportation modeling upgrade for the next Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy, and the next wave of transportation projects that include road, trail and transit improvements.

# El Niño

Continued from p. 1

Weather Service. "There's no direct correlation between it and above-normal rainfall when you have a moderate El Niño. It's only the stronger El Niños that produce above-normal rainfall, and that's not what's being forecast. It could produce above-normal rainfall, but it could also produce below-normal."

There have been seven moderate El Niños between 1951 and 2013. Only two produced above-normal rainfall in the Tulare and Kings County area. One led to near-normal rainfall, and four were below normal.

In that same period, there have been four "strong" El Niño's, with all of them resulting in above-normal rainfall years.

El Niños are the result of unusually warm ocean temperatures in the equatorial Pacific, which have a significant impact on weather conditions around the world. El Niños have increased rainfall along the southern part of the U.S. and in South America, occasionally causing severe flooding in some areas. As a result, the conditions in the Pacific are closely watched and are used to predict the climate in the U.S. and other countries.

The current El Niño Watch was issued because conditions were determined to be favorable for the development of El Niño conditions within the next six months.

The NWS, which keeps an eye on the situation, provides updates every month or so. There is a chance that conditions could change, resulting in a stronger El Niño developing, but again, any hopes it will end our drought appear to be fading.

"The trend has been, from a few months ago, that it has been getting weaker," said Mendenhall, "but it's still in the moderate category."

In its June 5, 2014 El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Outlook/Forecast, the NWS stated, "Forecasters at NOAA's (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Climate Prediction Center said the chance of El Niño developing is quite high, with 70% chance of El Niño during the summer, and an 80% chance during the fall and winter. There is uncertainty as to how strong it may become but some models slightly favor a moderate-strength event in the fall or winter."

The NWS added that indications were for a 73% chance of El Niño developing July-September; an 80% chance of El Niño developing September-November, and an 82% chance of El Niño developing November-January.

"The changes are very slight and slow," said Susan Buchanan, NOAA Communications and External Affairs for the National Weather Service in Silver Spring, Maryland. "It's not like a tornado."

Buchanan said there was at least a chance for more rain in the Western U.S., and there may be more significant changes in other parts of the country. "El Niños can create conditions that make it more difficult for hurricanes to develop," she said.

The next NOAA ENSO Outlook will be released on July 10. Things could change for us, but don't count on it.

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# Deborah Sierra to Replace Donnette Silva Carter as Porterville Chamber President/CEO

**Staff Reports**

The Porterville Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has announced the impending resignation of long-time Chamber President/CEO Donnette Silva Carter, effective July 31st. Carter has served as the organization's executive for over 17 years. Previously, she worked as executive director with the American Diabetes Association and the American Cancer Society.

Carter will relocate to Hollister to join her husband, Joe, who began employment this spring as the director of safety, compliance and driver recruitment with Brent Redmond Transportation. After three years of living in different households, the Carters look forward to this next phase in their lives and new community. In Hollister, she will work for the 33rd District Agricultural Association, San Benito County Fair and Bolado Park Event Center as its new CEO and fair manager.

"Donnette has been a mainstay of the Porterville business environment and community for many years," said Board Chair Milt Stowe. "She has been a wonderful representative for the greater Porterville area and leaves behind a long list of accomplishments. Her influence on and enthusiasm for the Porterville Chamber of Commerce will be missed, but we congratulate her on her new career and the chance to be with Joe full-time."

Moving forward, at its June 20th meeting, the board of directors appointed Deborah Sierra as the new president/CEO, effective August 1, 2014.

"Deborah has been on staff at the chamber for three years as director of membership and special events," noted Stowe. "With her local and other chamber experience, and her background in banking branch management, we look forward to having her in this position, and anticipate a fairly seamless transition for our organization and its members."

In her tenure at the Porterville Chamber, Carter's leadership, in partnership with the boards over the years, has doubled the organization's membership to 700, significantly increased the financial resources, developed expanded programming, grown the city's promotion and tourism, and built community support to a team of over 100 volunteers. She is recognized as a driving force behind the successful launch and 16-year sustainability of the Iris Festival, working with the event's chairs and committees to annually welcome 30,000 attendees to a one-day street festival complete with over 200 vendors, amusements, entertainment stages, chili cook-off and Enspirit, Inc's Festival of Colors Run.

Carter graduated from the four-year U.S. Chamber Institute for Organization Management program. She is a member and public relations chair of the Rotary Club of Porterville, sits on the board of the Central California Family Crisis Center, and has been involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters, St. Anne's Parish Catholic Daughters and other organizations. Her professional affiliations include the Tulare County EDC Board, Porterville Unified School District Pathways P8 Coalition, Workforce Investment Board ECC, Sequoia Tourism Council, Porterville Employer Advisory Council, Central CA Chamber Alliance and several City of Porterville committee appointments. Additionally, she serves as vice chair of the Western Association of Chamber Executives Foundation Board, and is a member of the California Board of Directors for the Future Business Leaders of America.

Porterville Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Donnette Silva Carter

"While I'm moving toward a wonderful new opportunity, it is indeed with a sad and heavy heart that I leave Porterville, the town I've called home for over a decade," said Carter. "I care deeply for this community, the chamber, its members and our staff. Serving as Porterville Chamber president/CEO has truly been an honor and a joy. You will definitely see us back in town visiting events and people with whom we plan to continue connecting."

"Donnette brings a strong background in marketing and public relations, fiscal, board, volunteer, event and staff management, government affairs, revenue generation, tourism promotion, and economic development," said 33rd District Agricultural Association Board Chair Michael Cullinan. "The DAA Board feels she has the skill set needed to advance the 33rd District, San Benito County Fair and Bolado Park Event Center into the future."

The Visalia Rescue Mission held a grand opening celebration for its new Mission Market on June 17th. The market, located at 500 E. Race St., offers heirloom tomatoes, varieties of peppers, beans, eggplant, squash, blackberries, melons, grapes, peaches, nectarines and more, all grown at the rescue mission. The Mission Market is open 10am-6pm Monday through Friday.

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# Unmanned Aircraft Operation Now Prohibited in National Parks

**Staff Reports**

National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis signed a policy memorandum on June 20th that directs superintendents nationwide to prohibit launching, landing or operating unmanned aircraft on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service.

"We embrace many activities in national parks because they enhance visitor experiences with the iconic natural, historic and cultural landscapes in our care," Jarvis said. "However, we have serious concerns about the negative impact that flying unmanned aircraft is having in parks, so we are prohibiting their use until we can determine the most appropriate policy that will protect park resources and provide all visitors with a rich experience."

Unmanned aircraft have already been prohibited at several national parks. These parks initiated bans after noise and nuisance complaints from park visitors, an incident in which park wildlife were harassed, and park visitor safety concerns.

Last September, an unmanned aircraft flew above evening visitors seated in the Mount Rushmore National Memorial Amphitheater. Park rangers concerned for visitors' safety confiscated the unmanned aircraft.

In April, visitors at Grand Canyon National Park gathered for a quiet sunset, which was interrupted by a loud unmanned aircraft flying back and forth and eventually crashing in the canyon. Later in the month, volunteers at Zion National Park witnessed an unmanned aircraft disturb a herd of bighorn sheep, reportedly separating adults from young animals.

The policy memorandum directs park superintendents to take a number of steps to exclude unmanned aircraft from national parks. The steps include drafting a written justification for the action, ensuring compliance with applicable laws, and providing public notice of the action.

The memorandum does not affect the primary jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration over the National Airspace System.

The policy memorandum is a temporary measure. Jarvis said the next step will be to propose a service-wide regulation regarding unmanned aircraft. That process can take considerable time, depending on the complexity of the rule, and includes public notice of the proposed regulation and opportunity for public comment.

The policy memo directs superintendents to use their existing authority to prohibit the use of unmanned aircraft, and to include that prohibition in the park's compendium, a set of park-specific regulations.

All permits previously issued for unmanned aircraft will be suspended until reviewed and approved by the associate director of the National Park Service's Visitor and Resource Protection directorate. The associate director must approve any new special use permits authorizing the use of unmanned aircraft. Superintendents who have previously authorized the use of model aircraft for hobbyist or recreational use may allow such use to continue.

The National Park Service may use unmanned aircraft for administrative purposes such as search and rescue, fire operations and scientific study. These uses must also be approved by the associate director for Visitor and Resource Protection.

# Draft Wilderness Stewardship Plan for National Parks Available for Review

**Staff Reports**

The National Park Service (NPS) has opened the public comment period for the Wilderness Stewardship Plan/ Draft Environmental Impact Statement (WPS/DEIS) for Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. All public comments must be received by August 25.

The NPS will use the framework established in the final version of this document to preserve wilderness character, provide opportunities for and encourage public use and enjoyment of the wilderness, and improve conditions in areas where there may be unacceptable levels of impacts on wilderness character.

More information, including the WSP/ DEIS, is available on the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/sekiwild or by calling Nancy Hendricks, environmental protection specialist, at 565-3102. A CD-version of the document is also available.

Printed versions of the document may be found at the parks' visitor centers in Sequoia National Park: Foothills Visitor Center, Mineral King, Giant Forest Museum, and Lodgepole; at the parks' visitor centers in Kings Canyon National Park at Grant Grove and Cedar Grove; and locally at the Tulare County Library branches in Dinuba, Exeter, Lindsay, Three Rivers, Visalia and Porterville.

Interested parties are encouraged to make comments about the plan on the PEPC website. Electronic comments will only be accepted through this website. Comments will also be accepted in writing (by hand-delivery, mail or fax). To submit written comments by letter, you may send them by U.S. Postal Service or other mail delivery service, or hand-deliver your comments to: Superintendent, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Attn: WSP/DEIS, 47050 Generals Highway, Three Rivers, CA 93271. In addition, faxed comments will be accepted at 565-4202. Anonymous comments will not be considered.

To learn more about the plan, the public is invited to attend informational meetings at the Visalia Marriott Hotel on July 28th from 6-9pm. The meeting will begin with an open house with posters and information about the alternatives. A formal presentation will occur at 7pm. Attendees will have an opportunity to learn more about the plan, to find out how to provide comments on the plan, and to ask questions and discuss the plan with park staff.

# Tulare County Sets Orientation for Prospective Foster Parents

**Staff Reports**

Tulare County Foster Care Licensing will hold an orientation for prospective foster parents at 6:30pm on Thursday, July 17, at its office at 26500 S. Mooney Blvd. in Visalia.

In addition to scheduled orientations, Tulare County Foster Care licensing staff members now offer personal orientations in order to be more accessible to prospective foster parents.

Foster care is a program that provides shelter to children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse, neglect or abandonment, or because their parents are ill or incarcerated. The shelter may be emergency, short-term care or longer term. There are nearly 1,000 children in Tulare County's foster care program, and there are not enough foster care homes. Of particular need are foster parents prepared to take in siblings or teenagers, and parents willing to respond to emergency placement needs. Foster parents are needed in every community of Tulare County, so that children can remain in their own school.

People who are interested in becoming foster parents will need to attend an orientation meeting, and meet requirements such as being at least 18 years old, being financially able to support their own family, having no criminal record and a clear health screening, and being certified in CPR and first aid.

To schedule a personal orientation, or for other information, call 623-0581.

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# Republican Assembly Leader Conway Critical of State Budget Plan

Assembly Republican Leader Connie Conway, of Tulare, issued a critical response to the approval of the new state budget plan.

"The majority party's budget plan reflects their misguided priorities – spending increases, more pet projects and new programs that will put Californians on the hook for higher future spending," Conway said in a statement. "It also breaks Sacramento's promise to voters that Prop. 30 dollars would go for higher education by using some of these funds to increase spending in other areas of the budget.

"In all, the Democrats have increased spending by $12 billion. That is new spending that comes with a price tag year after year regardless of the state having the revenue to pay for it, and ignores the important lessons the recent recession taught us.

"I am also particularly concerned about slapping statewide law on school districts to force them to spend their reserve funds," Conway continued. "This move by the Democrats is fiscally irresponsible at best and puts districts in financial jeopardy making it harder to ensure that students in low-performing schools will be able to learn from a great teacher."

Conway's comments were not all negative, however.

"I am pleased to see that the budget saves some of our current tax windfall for a rainy day, pays down some of state's billions of dollars in debt, and that voters will finally have the opportunity to vote on a Rainy Day Fund this fall - all proposals Republicans have strongly championed," she said.

# Fourth of July is No Blast for Your Pets

**Valley Oak SPCA**

Americans love a patriotic Fourth of July party that includes lots of family, friends, food and loud fireworks. To our pets, especially dogs, however, it is a nightmare. Canines have a keen sense of hearing and the blasts from the fireworks can cause them distress and be disorienting. Your pet may try to escape the sounds and may start exhibiting some extreme nervous behaviors such as excessive barking, digging, shaking, trembling, running around in circles, running into doors, hiding or worst of all, running away.

More pets get lost on the Fourth of July than any other time of the year. Each year, animal shelters experience an increase in the number of calls about lost or injured animals and the busiest time at animal shelters is after the fireworks. If pet owners follow a few preventative steps now, they can reduce the chances their pet will get lost or injured, and increase the chances of recovery if they do get away.

Loud, crowded fireworks displays are no fun for pets. Keep all pets safely confined indoors away from the noise in a quiet, sheltered and escape-proof area at home before and after the holiday, when people may be inclined to set off fireworks.

If you know that your pet is seriously distressed by loud noises, consult with your veterinarian before July 4th for ways to help alleviate the fear and anxiety he or she will experience during fireworks displays.

Never leave pets outside unattended during fireworks, even in a fenced yard or on a chain. In their fear, pets who normally wouldn't leave the yard may escape and become lost, or become entangled in their chain, risking injury or death.

Animals found running at-large should be taken to the local animal shelter, where they will have the best chance of being reunited with their owners.

Make sure your pets are wearing current, visible identification at all times. Writing your phone number with a permanent marker on your pet's collar can get you a phone call from a Good Samaritan if they should find your pet. Valley Oak SPCA recommends you consider getting your dog or cat microchipped. A microchip is a permanent ID that can never be removed or become impossible to read. Microchips do not hurt your pet, do not require surgery and do not wear out. They do give your pet the best chance of coming back home to you.

No bigger than a grain of rice, a pet microchip is a radio-frequency identification transponder made up of just a few components encased within a slender capsule of bioglass, which is used extensively for implants in both humans and animals. A microchip's sole function is to store a unique ID number that is used to retrieve a pet parent's contact information. It differs from a Global Positioning System/GPS, which is used for tracking, and requires a power source such as a battery.

When a microchip scanner is passed over the skin of a microchipped pet, the implanted microchip emits a radio frequency signal. The scanner reads the microchip's unique ID code. The microchip registry is called, and the registry company uses the ID number to retrieve the pet's parent contact information from the pet recovery database. Valley Oak SPCA offers microchipping for $35 per pet. Call 651-1111 or 741-1121 for more information.

## NEW ADOPTION PROGRAMS

Valley Oak SPCA is offering new adoption specials for seniors, senior pets and military personnel.

"In an effort to find new homes for more animals, we are pleased to announce an expansion to our Pets for Seniors program and new adoption programs for our service personnel and senior pets," said Tami Crawford, executive director.

The Pets for Seniors program is designed for those people 55 years or older who would like to adopt a pet. Pets for Seniors adoption fees are $20 for cats and $25 for dogs – for pets arriving at the SPCA shelter already spayed or neutered. For any pets that the SPCA spays or neuters, adoption fees are $60 for cats and $125 for dogs.

The Silver Muzzle Club is to help rehome senior cats and dogs, ages 5 years and older. Senior animals make great pets and have lots of love to share. Senior pets may be adopted for $5 off adoption prices.

The Military Service program is designed for active, retired and veteran military personnel who would like to adopt a pet. Military service personnel can adopt a dog or cat at 15% discount. Each adoption also includes a free gift of pet apparel, toy or grooming supplies.

In addition to the cats and kittens available at its shelter, Valley Oak SPCA has cats for adoption at Petsmart in Visalia and Porterville.

Valley Oak SPCA is open Monday and Wednesday from 9:30am to 6pm, and Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9am to 5pm and Sunday from noon to 3pm. Call 651-1111 for more information.

New Dairy Princess Hannah Van Dyke (left) with First Alternate Baylee Cocagne

# Hannah Van Dyk of Tulare Selected as District 9 Dairy Princess

**Staff Reports**

Hannah Van Dyk of Tulare was selected as the 2014-2015 Dairy Princess for the California Milk Advisory Board's (CMAB) District 9. The crowning took place before a crowd of approximately 225 dairy industry members and their families and friends, on June 20 at the Heritage Complex International Agri-Center in Tulare.

Retiring Dairy Princess Elyse Borba of Porterville ended her reign by turning over the title to Hannah, wishing her well as she represents the California dairy industry in the coming year.

Hannah will represent District 9, which includes Inyo, Mono and Tulare counties. As Dairy Princess, she will play an important role on the CMAB's Communications Services team in meeting community relations objectives.

The daughter of Chris and Jolene Van Dyk, Hannah is currently attending Tulare Western High School.

First Alternate, Baylee Cocagne, is the daughter of Robert Cocagne and Diane Luiz of Tulare. Baylee, who attends Mission Oak High School, will assist the new District 9 Dairy Princess in her duties, which include speaking on behalf of the California dairy industry at schools, service clubs, with the media, and at numerous public events throughout the year.

In addition, both will attend a training session, including presentation skills, a CMAB orientation, and a tour of a processing facility.

Along with the excitement of naming the new Dairy Princess, Tulare County students received scholarships from the Tulare County Dairywomen committee for a total of $3,000. The recipients were Sydnie Sousa, Marisa Martin, Isabella Benedetti, Julia Schott, Octavio Martin and Craig Kampen.

In addition, Tulare County Dairy Women named David and Donna Ribero of Rib-Arrow Dairy in Tulare as Dairy Family of the Year for 2014. David, along with his father, Joe, started the dairy in 1994. Today, David and his wife, Donna, own and operate the family dairy with their children: Tyler and his wife, Jennifer; Cameron; and Gabrielle. The Ribero family has strong ties to the Tulare County community, including continued support of local 4-H and FFA programs as well as Tulare First Baptist Church, Antique Farm Equipment Show and the World Ag Expo.

The mistresses of ceremonies for the gala evening were Elyse Borba and Jessica Lawrence of Tulare. Contestants were judged on poise, personality, speaking ability, education and dairy background. Judges for the contest were Tom Barcellos of Porterville, Karen DeGroot of Pixley and Brian Medeiros of Hanford. The event chairpersons were Melissa Gomes, Kortnee Faria and Amie Pitigliano, and the dinner was catered by Happy Cookers Catering in Tulare.

California is the nation's leading milk producer. It also produces more butter, ice cream, yogurt and nonfat dry milk than any other state. The state is the second-largest producer of cheese, which is available nationally under the Real California Cheese seal.

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# West Nile Virus Still Active in Tulare County

**Staff Reports**

Recently, a case of West Nile Virus was reported to Tulare County Health and Human Services. The individual impacted was hospitalized and is now recovering. Delta Vector Control District reported that 36 mosquito pools and 21 dead birds have tested positive for West Nile.

During the summer months, community members should be on guard and protect themselves while enjoying outdoor activities.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the West Nile Virus is transmitted to humans by mosquitoes, and there is no vaccine or medication to treat the virus. Most people infected with West Nile will have no signs of the disease; however, about 20% will develop a fever with other symptoms. It is important to note that people over 50 are at higher risk of more serious illness.

Community members are urged to be aware of potential breeding grounds around their properties, including homes that are unoccupied or in foreclosure, since many have swimming pools or backyard ponds that could breed mosquitoes.

It is recommended that residents take precautions to avoid being bitten, reducing the opportunity for exposure to West Nile Virus.

Use an effective mosquito repellent such as DEET. Always follow label instructions carefully. Dress in long sleeves and long pants during dawn and dusk or in areas where mosquitoes are active.

Drain standing water that may produce mosquitoes.

Repair or replace door and window screens that have tears or holes.

To help track the West Nile Virus, report all dead birds and squirrels. Call 1-877-968-2473 to report a dead bird or squirrel, or submit an online report to the California West Nile website at http://westnile.ca.gov.

# Tom Collishaw Becomes President and CEO of Self-Help Enterprises

**Staff Reports**

Tom Collishaw started his new position as president and CEO of Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) on Tuesday. Collishaw, who was the organization's vice president, is now the fourth CEO in its 50-year history.

Collishaw first came to SHE 32 years ago as a VISTA volunteer after graduating from Colgate University in upstate New York. He has held a variety of increasingly responsible positions within the organization, including director of development, new homes program manager and administrative analyst in the new homes and rehabilitation divisions.

Since becoming vice president in 1993, Collishaw has been directly responsible for all land and project development activity, including project financing for single-family housing, rental housing, and water and wastewater activities. During his tenure, SHE has developed thousands of single family and multifamily housing units, and has been a leader in local homeownership, housing rehabilitation, sewer and water development, and community development efforts.

"I look forward to my new role at the organization, especially at a time when we celebrate our 50th year of building and sustaining healthy homes and communities," said Collishaw. "We will continue to invest in the lives of our participants, the future of their children and in stronger, more productive communities."

Long-time president and CEO Peter Carey retired on June 30th after 40 years with the organization and 25 years as CEO. Carey will remain an active participant in housing and community development at the national level in his role as acting Chief Operating Officer of NeighborWorks America, a network of more than 240 community development and affordable housing organizations.

SHE is currently planning its first-ever rental housing development in Visalia, expanded impact of water and sewer development efforts, building on its partner programs with local cities, and large new multi-faceted developments in Patterson and Goshen.

For more information about Self-Help Enterprises, visit SelfHelpEnterprises.org.

# Avoid Scams When Looking to Rent

**Better Business Bureau**

In today's market, fewer people are buying homes so it's no surprise that dishonest companies and landlords are now targeting renters. Your BBB is urging consumers to be aware of these types of scams when looking to rent an apartment or house.

"Scammers often take advantage of people looking for a new place by asking for personal information such as credit history, social security numbers and work history, which leaves the victim open to identity theft," said Blair Looney, president and CEO of the BBB serving Central California and Inland Empire counties.

How does this scam work? Renters looking for a house or an apartment to lease get scammed by someone who poses as an "owner." Victims come across a place in a great area, at a great price. The advertisement looks legitimate, so they reach out to the "owner," generally by email. The "owner" says the renter can secure the place by sending money to cover an application fee, security deposit, etc. Often, the owner claims there is a need to move quickly, since others are interested. The prospective renter sends the money, but never hears from the "owner" again.

The Better Business Bureau offers the following advice when looking to rent:

- Check them out with your local BBB at cencal.bbb.org or call us at 1-800-675-8118, ext. 5.
- Beware of e-mail correspondence from a potential "landlord" that's written in poor English or lacks complete sentences.
- Only deal with individuals and organizations who are local and visit the location you are interested in renting before paying any money or signing any contracts.
- Be suspicious if you're asked to only use a wire transfer service for rental payments.
- Research the average rental rates in the area and be suspicious if the rate is significantly lower.
- Lastly, remember if it sounds to good to be true, it probably is.

For more information, visit cencal.bbb.org or call 1-800-675-8118


Home-Generated
Sharps
Drop-Off Days

These events are only for residents of Tulare County:

- June 14 (Saturday) 10 am to 2 pm
  Tulare City Hall - 411 E. Kern - Rear Parking Lot
- June 26 (Thursday) 2 pm to 6 pm
  Dinuba Transit Center Parking Lot - 180 W. Merced
- July 10 (Thursday) 2pm to 6pm
  Visalia - Parking Lot 44 - Tipton at Oak, between Center and Murray
- July 19 (Saturday) 8 am to 12 pm
  Porterville Corporation Yard
  555 N. Prospect, Enter on Grand Ave

The new Home-Generated Sharps Waste Collection Program goes into effect on July 1, 2014. To launch the program, Consolidated Waste Management Authority is hosting four free drop-off events throughout Tulare County to collect sharps from residents. Sharps will only be accepted in approved certified sharps containers.

The program provides Tulare County residents free drop-off of their used sharps at the local retailer where they originally purchased their sharps.

**What are home-generated sharps?**
Needles, syringes and lancets used by residents for themselves, family members, or their pets.

**Why do I need to use the drop-off service?**
It is illegal to dispose of sharps waste in the trash, recycling, and yard waste containers or flush them down the toilet.

**What do I need to know?**

- Certified sharps containers can be purchased at your local pharmacy.
- Sharps in any other type of container will not be accepted.
- No drugs or prescription medicines accepted.
- These events are for home-generated sharps waste only.
- Proof of Tulare County residency is required by showing either a driver's license or current utility bill with a Tulare County address.

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# Project Based Learning Immerses Teachers in the Great Outdoors

**Staff Reports**

Project Based Learning in the Great Outdoors (PBL-GO) is a new teacher training program scheduled for August 3-6 in the Sequoia National Park. The program is designed to immerse teachers in the great outdoors and prepare them to lead their own PBL unit involving outdoor field trips and topics.

Circle J-Norris Ranch, the field study site of the SCICON program, is a partner in the training. According to Circle J Lead Teacher Nancy Bruce, "Teachers will spend three glorious days in Sequoia National Park working with like-minded teachers and resource experts. They will leave with a written PBL plan to engage students in outdoor learning, guided by the driving question created during the workshop."

PBL-GO brings together teachers and resource experts to co-develop field studies that increase environmental literacy and project based learning skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity. Presenters provide educational support and professional guidance for teachers to lead their students as they take on challenging environmental issues.

"Another important aspect of PBL-GO is that teachers will develop a network of long-term professional relationships with teachers and resource experts who will provide support throughout the school year," adds Bruce. "This professional network will assist teachers in locating experts who can work with classes and serve as an authentic audience to students presenting their work."

In December, PBL-GO teachers will participate in a symposium where they report on progress and challenges with their ongoing project and receive structured support from their peers. Exemplary projects will be invited to an exhibition to allow students to share their progress and the results of the PBL-GO unit with the greater community, perhaps at the second annual "A Night at the 21st Century Museum" event to be held in spring 2015.

PBL-GO is a project of the Sequoia Environmental Education Directive (SEED). The SEED team includes representatives from Tulare County Office of Education, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Sequoia Riverlands Trust, Circle J-Norris Ranch and Sequoia Natural History Association. SEED is dedicated to providing outdoor field trips that inspire students, teachers and community members to explore, examine and conserve local ecosystems.

"Tulare County is rich with outdoor education opportunities," says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. "I am delighted to see the partner organizations working together to provide students with meaningful project based learning experiences."

Students in Porterville High School's Alternative Energy Resource Occupations (AERO) Academy were challenged to design and build a model sun/rain shelter for Circle J-Norris Ranch. Seniors in the Academy visited the ranch three times throughout the school year, engaging in selection of building sites, shelter design and building materials that would have minimal impact on the natural environment. Students worked in teams to complete the project, then presented their concepts, highlighting the special features of their shelters. All shelters were then subjected to wind-tunnel tests to ensure that the designs can withstand inclement weather.

Students from Porterville High School's AERO Academy collect a water sample at the inlet to the Circle J pond so they can compare the quality of the incoming water to the water in the pond. Over the course of three field trips during the 2013-14 school year, the students engaged in studies of the wetlands and wildlife of the oak/woodland ecosystem.

# Political Fix

Continued from p. 3

Sitting here between two lounging cats at my home in Lemon Cove, the answer seems pretty clear to me: We need to line our troops along the border of Jordan and Iraq and stabilize that part of the Middle East. Why? Because Jordan actually likes us, and we like them. Sure, it's a monarchy--but we love monarchies. We practically tripped over ourselves to save Kuwait's monarchy when Iraq took over that country in 1990.

Who doesn't love the elegant Queen Noor, widow of the late King Hussein of Jordan? And who doesn't gawk at her beautiful successor, Queen Rania, while she pursues her charitable work amongst the refugees and orphans, all while impeccably dressed?

While we are at it, we need to do the same in Iraq's two other neighbors, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, hemming in the entire region. Seal off Syria, Iraq and Iran, and let them fight it out like the Christians did when Christianity was the same age as Islam is now. In a hundred years or so, the survivors might decide that how one is descended from Mohamed is not what makes one a good Muslim, and then they can go back to fighting over oil like good Christians do.

# Audit

Continued from p. 1

lawmakers and members of the Joint Committee on Legislative Audit. Their first meeting was with the chief of staff of Assembly Member Adam Gray, who chairs the Joint Committee on Legislative Audit. His chief of staff met with the group and outlined the process they need to take to get on the committee's agenda. Paperwork and documents need to be submitted by July 15th for consideration before putting Tulare County's case on their agenda in August.

The negotiating team met next with an assistant to State Senator Jean Fuller, who encouraged the employees to persevere. "She seemed genuinely concerned and wanted to see if her office could be of any assistance," said Kermit Wullschleger, a member of the county delegation. "They had received and carefully read all the letters we sent them and our petitions." Fuller's office offered to write the BOS a letter inquiring as to why their employees have not received an equity adjustment. To do this, the negotiating team needs to get her a copy of the county's last offer of a 0% raise, which may or may not be in writing.

Before leaving Sacramento, the negotiating team also met with the assistants to 31st District Assembly Member Henry Perea, from Fresno, and the vice chair of the Joint Committee on Legislative Audit, Senator Ricardo Lara. The legislators reminded the negotiating team of the deadlines to request an audit, and wanted to be kept informed of the Tulare County employees' progress with their contract.

Thursday morning it was back to Visalia and the negotiating table. According to Wullschleger, negotiations have been going on almost every week between a core group of employees and the county's legal team since April, but their only offer, week after week, has been 0%. "We don't even consider that an offer. Until we started going public, they were very dismissive of our requests."

It seems that the rank-and-file finally have the BOS' ear.

The BOS and Human Resources Department have not been happy about the protests and were shocked that the employees went to the media. To the employees and larger community it seemed to be a logical response.

"What did the board expect?" asked Wullshleger. The support and the publicity seem to have worked, because on June 27th the county finally started to move. After seven hours of negotiations, the county offered a raise which has lead to more productive talks between the two sides. No details about the negotiations will be divulged until an agreement is reached.

Working fulltime, taking care of extended family, and participating on the negotiating team seems to just strengthen Tulare County employee Linda Castillo's resolve. At the evening BOS meeting last week, she spoke with grit about the county's spending $280,000 on chairs and possibly another $1.8 million on car upgrades. It was recently discovered in a Kaweah Delta Hospital newsletter that Tulare County Health and Human Services had donated between $100,000 and $500,000 to the hospital's foundation. These expenditures might not be the best use of Tulare County's tax dollars, Castillo points out to anyone who will listen, and that Tulare County's best resources aren't cars or chairs. "Tulare County's most precious and valuable resource is people, the Tulare County workers."

### 'WHEN IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH?'

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and County Administrative Officer (CAO) allow purchases of about $280,000 in office chairs, but denies a majority of its workforce raises for the seventh year in a row?

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When the BOS receives almost 9% in raises in one year alone, but denies a majority of its workforce raises for the seventh year in a row?

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When the BOS grants the CAO over 10% in raises in 2012 and a 3% raise in 2013, but denies a majority of its workforce raises for the seventh year in a row?

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When the BOS and CAO changes the rules for its executives, allowing them to be granted up to 10% in raises per year when a majority of the employees are only allowed 5% step increases when they first begin working for the county?

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When the CAO requests the BOS hires an assistant CAO at about $140,000 per year, but denies a majority of its workforce raises for the seventh year in a row?

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When the CAO and the BOS grant raises in 2013 to themselves, county elected officials, confidential clerical workers, professionals, mid-management, executive management/department heads, probation management, and assistant department heads, but denies a majority of its workforce raises for the seventh year in a row?

IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH
When Tulare County HHSA provides an Employee Incentive Survey but does not include an incentive such as an equity adjustment but continues to deny a majority of its workforce raises for the seventh year in a row?

WHEN IS ENOUGH, ENOUGH?

Linda Castillo & Kermit Wullschleger

# Budget

Continued from p. 1

money coming out of the general fund to buy new lights for Rawhide Stadium. Nelsen countered that the stadium was built in the 1940s and still had its original lights. But energy-saving technology has come a long way since then, and the lights do not comply with current standards. Shuklian and Collins' beef was that the cost of new lights should have been included in the original budget for the stadium's remodel. If the lights put the project over budget then they could have shaved money off of another aspect of the park. Neither council member thought it appropriate for general fund dollars, which could go to hiring more police or firefighters, to go to Rawhide stadium. The new lights will end up costing the city almost $1 million.

Collins' other gripe was the exorbitant cost of the new Visalia Emergency Communications Center building (VECC) more commonly known as the police dispatch center. Because the city is spending so much on the building, $18 million, the construction of a new police station and city hall has to be postponed. Gubler was more circumspect, realizing that the cost is an unavoidable result of the fact that the VECC building falls under the category of essential services. By law, it has to be built to a higher standard. This will ultimately save Visalia money when it comes time to build the new police station and city hall. In fact, he wants the staff to put the construction of the new city hall on the front burner because they have already purchased the land and have made a commitment to downtown Visalia to build.

The Visalia Charter states that at any regularly scheduled meeting, the city council may make changes to the adopted budget. That being the case, council has the ability to reshape the budget as it sees fit throughout the year.


Días para la recoleccion agujas usada generadas por uso domestico.

AGUJAS

Estos eventos son solo para residentes del Condado de Tulare:

- Junio 14 (Sábado) 10 am a 2 pm
  Ayuntamiento de Tulare
  411 E. Kern - estacionamiento trasero
- Junio 26 (Jueves) 2 pm a 6 pm
  Estación de autobuses de Dinuba - 180 W. Merced
- Julio 10 (Jueves) 2pm a 6pm
  Estacionamiento 44 de Visalia - Calle Tipton y Oak Ave
- July 19 (Sábado) 8 am a 12 pm
  Almacén de la Ciudad de Porterville - (Corporation Yard)
  555 N. Prospect, Entre por la avenida Grand

El nuevo Programa para la Recolección de agujas usadas generadas por uso doméstico entra en efecto el 1 de Julio del 2014. El Departamento Consolidado para la Recolección de Residuos está patrocinando un evento gratuito de 4 horas para los residentes del Condado de Tulare. Las agujas usadas solamente se aceptaran en contenedores aprobados y certificados.

El programa proporciona a los residentes del Condado de Tulare la oportunidad de llevar las agujas usadas a la tienda o establecimiento donde se hayan comprado originalmente sin costo alguno.

¿Que son las agujas generadas por uso doméstico?
Agujas, jeringas y lancetas usadas por personas, miembros de familia, o mascotas.

¿Por qué debo de utilizar el servicio de recolección?
Es ilegal tirar las agujas usadas en los contenedores de basura regular, reciclable y para desechos de yarda, o tirarlas en el excusado.

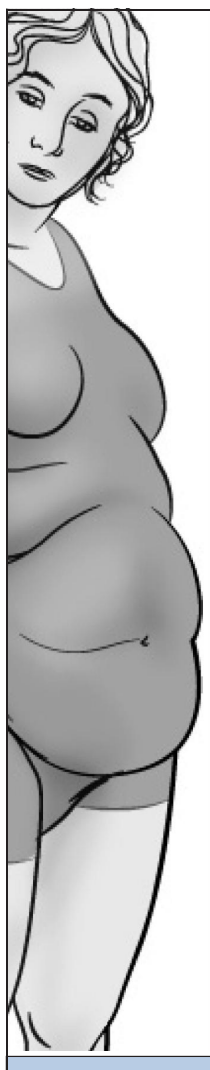
¿Qué necesito saber?

- Los contenedores certificados pueden comprarse en su farmacia local.
- No se aceptaran agujas usadas en cualquier otro tipo de contenedor.
- No se aceptaran medicinas recetadas o drogas.
- Estos eventos son para recolectar solamente agujas usadas generadas por uso doméstico.
- Se requiere presentar un comprobante de residencia en el Condado de Tulare, como la licencia de conducir o un estado de cuenta actual de cualquier servicio doméstico con dirección en el Condado de Tulare.

CWMA

For more information:
Call 559.713-4404 or visit: www.cwmarecycles.com





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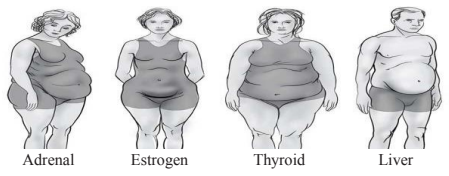

Dr. Ruben Garcia

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- ✓ Learn why "Counting Calories" doesn't work for belly fat.
- ✓ Learn the Biggest Mistake that people make with Exercise that prevents weight loss.
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# Briefly...

## Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report to be Released

The 2013 Annual Crop and Livestock Report for Tulare County will be presented to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, July 8, in the board's chambers, 2800 Burrel Ave., Visalia. Copies of the report will be available during the presentation. Agricultural Commissioner Marilyn Kinoshita will present the report and add brief comments.

Annual crop and livestock reports are prepared by agricultural commissioners each year as required by law. Included in the reports are the acreage, production and value of each of the many crops grown in the county. The reports are used by the media, legislators, insurance companies, financial institutions and many others interested in the value of commodities produced.

## Ruiz Foods Announces Phase II Expansion of Texas Facility

On June 19, Ruiz Food Products, Inc., based in Dinuba, announced the Phase II Expansion of its Denison, Texas manufacturing facility.

"With Phase II, we will continue to meet the growing demand in key market segments," said Rachel Cullen, Ruiz Foods president & CEO. "We are also pleased to announce that with Phase II Ruiz Foods – Denison hopes to add up to 150 to 175 new jobs over the next several years."

The company announced its initial expansion into Texas in May 2005. A complete renovation of the facility began immediately. By January 2006, the company scheduled its first shipment of El Monterey Family Pack Burritos.

"Texas and the City of Denison are blessed to be the home of Ruiz Foods' fastest growing plant. They are a superior corporate citizen and provide not only a highly sought-after product but excellent job opportunities for our region," said Denison Mayor Jared Johnson. "Ruiz Foods will now become the largest investor and employer in Denison's manufacturing history. Congratulations to the Ruiz family and their management team for building and expanding their world class company in Denison."

## Meeting to Discuss Demaree and Goshen Improvements

A public information meeting will be held 5:30-6:30pm on Tuesday, July 15th, at Anthony Community Center, 345 N. Jacob St., Visalia, to discuss the intersection improvements scheduled at Demaree Street and Goshen Avenue.

The project consists of: widening of Demaree Street at the Demaree and Goshen intersection; traffic signal replacements; modification of the Goshen Trail intersection with the railroad and Demaree; railroad crossing coordination and upgrades; removal and replacement of county road sections; median improvements; upgrades to pedestrian accessibility; striping and signage; and other necessary improvements.

The project manager for the City of Visalia is Rebecca Keenan. Omni-Means is designing the improvements. Cost for design approved by the Visalia City Council is $279,627. The project is funded by Tulare County Measure R local funds, Local Transportation Development funds, and the Gas Tax fund.

The project is estimated to cost $3.1 million. Railroad crossing improvements and right-of-way acquisitions involved have the potential to significantly affect project costs. Cost estimates will be refined throughout the design stages, as the project progresses.

## FHLBank Awards Grant for Affordable Housing to Porterville

The Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco awarded $49.4 million in Affordable Housing Program (AHP) grants in the bank's 2014 AHP funding competition, including money for an AHP project in Porterville. The grants were awarded through 22 bank members to 76 projects that will construct or rehabilitate 5,055 units of housing affordable to lower-income individuals and families in Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington.

"The Affordable Housing Program has a long history of forging public-private partnerships that help families and individuals find affordable housing," said Lawrence Parks, bank senior vice president, external and legislative affairs. "As housing costs increase, the AHP continues to fulfill its purpose of providing affordable housing options for working families. We are proud of what this program is able to accomplish."

## Block Parties Planned For 2014 National Night Out Event

On Tuesday, August 5th, the Visalia Police Department, in conjunction with the National Association of Town Watch, will celebrate the 31st annual National Night Out citywide block party. Neighborhood Watch groups across America will gather in their communities to take a stand against crime and show their support for local crime prevention programs. National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support and participation in local crime prevention efforts, and to help strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships. Last year, 37.8 million people participated nationwide.

Neighborhood Watch groups across Visalia will be hosting block parties, barbecues, potlucks and ice cream socials. However, you don't have to be a member of a Neighborhood Watch group to participate.

If your neighborhood would like to participate in this year's event, call Visalia Police Department-Crime Prevention at 713-4370. The VPD asks that you register your block party by July 14th.

## Young Entrepreneurs Academy Seeks Students

The Visalia and Tulare Chambers of Commerce are co-hosting the Young Entrepreneurs Academy beginning in the fall, and are looking for determined, creative middle and high school students who want to learn hands on skills and start their own small business.

For more information, visit www.visaliachamber.org/pages/YEA33.

## Housing Resource Fair Set for July 12

The Tulare County Housing Resource Fair will be held on July 12 at the Visalia Convention Center to provide information and assistance to people interested in becoming first-time homebuyers, as well as for families at risk of home foreclosures. Co-sponsored by the City of Visalia, the resource fair offers free financial, legal and educational resources during the event that will run from 9am-1pm.

Representatives from businesses, government agencies and nonprofits involved in housing and home financing will be there, and there will be activities for children, as well as a raffle for adults. Sponsors for the fair include Community Services Employment Training, Central California Legal Services, Tenants Together and the Tulare County District Attorney's Office.

To become a sponsor, visit www.cset.org/housingfair.

## Houston Avenue Construction Project Underway

The south half of Houston Avenue in Visalia is being reconstructed between County Center Street and Woodland Street. Houston Avenue will be reduced to two lanes of traffic, one in each direction, between County Center Street and Woodland Street through the beginning of August.

Right turns from northbound County Center to eastbound Houston Avenue will not be allowed. Right turn traffic will be detoured north on County Center to Ferguson Avenue and then south on Mooney Boulevard.

For more information, contact City of Visalia Construction Management Supervisor, Chris Crawford, at 713-4331 or chris.crawford@ci.visalia.ca.us.

## Central California Blood Center Needs Donors

The Central California Blood Center is asking all blood donors to please give at donor centers in Fresno and Visalia in an effort to replenish the community's blood supply as soon as possible. Recent high blood usage has caused inventory to drop drastically, with O-negative blood type (at 6%) in particular need. Other blood types are very low as well, so all donors are needed today.

"Recent higher-than-expected usage has put a critical strain on our Valley's blood supply," said Dean Eller, president and CEO of the Central California Blood Center. "Therefore, we are asking new and returning donors to take just an hour of their time and help today. Patients in our Valley hospitals need you. All blood types are very low."

Blood donation takes less than one hour to complete. Donors must be in good general health, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be at least 17 years old (16 years old with written parental consent). Senior citizens are encouraged to donate, as there is no upper age limit. Donors should eat a good meal and drink plenty of water within four hours prior to their donation. Donors can give blood every eight weeks. Photo ID and Social Security Number are required at donor registration.

The Donor Center in Visalia is located at 1515 S. Mooney Blvd., and open 8am-6:30pm Monday-Thursday, 8am-6pm Friday, and 9am-1pm Saturday.

The Central California Blood Center is the sole provider of blood and blood products for the 31 hospitals in Fresno, Tulare, Madera, Kings and Mariposa Counties and must collect between 5,000 to 6,000 pints of blood a month to meet the needs of the Valley community.

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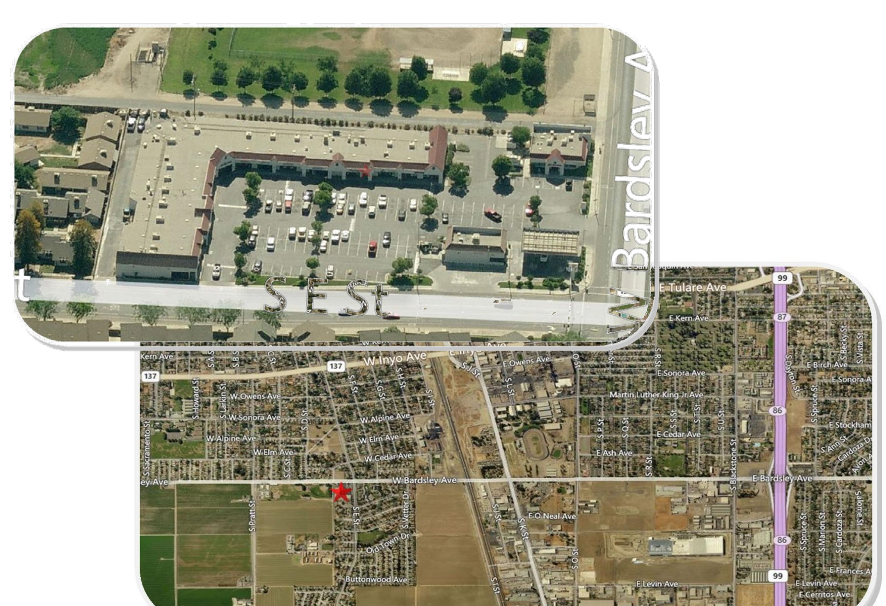


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# Anyone Can Be a Medium

**Catherine Doe**

A wise man once said that you teach what you need to learn. Michelle Tedrow is the poster child for that saying. After her brother died, she had a spiritual awakening and decided it was her calling to become a medium. She read the best books on the subject and sought out the advice of other mediums. "There was no one around to teach me in the beginning so I did a lot of reading and taught myself."

While honing her skills she got the overwhelming feeling that it was her mission to teach. "In a dream, my guides laid out the coursework for a six-week class on how to be a medium," said Tedrow. So she used that dream to teach a very popular course at Fresno City College on intuition. Because of the cutbacks experienced by all local colleges, the course was discontinued. She now leads a psychic development circle every month at the Cosmic Corral in Hanford, where she continues teaching the tenets of mediumship. "I think everyone has the ability to open up to their intuition and discover their guiding angels," she explained.

The circle, which meets the third Saturday of each month, usually consists of about six people who get together to improve their intuition. Darcy Bellows-Macorro, author of *Finding Vern*, explained that there is a huge advantage to developing and listening to your intuition. "It helps you in relationships and job decisions, or with your business. It's our natural ability to make the right decisions for ourselves, but you need to go by how it feels, not by what you think." Getting in touch with your intuition also is the first step of becoming a medium.

For the last ten years, that's what Tedrow has been doing every day, tuning in. The number one way to tune in to your body is to meditate, even if it's for ten minutes a day. If you don't know how to meditate, find a good youtube video and do a guided meditation. Meditation helps synchronize the right brain to the left brain. Intuition is a right brain function, so the left brain needs to slow down and put logic aside. All we are taught growing up is to think, but mediumship, and many other aspects of life, requires feeling. That is our natural guidance system, and it is the language of the soul.

Tedrow has her own exercise to get into her body and away from her left brain. She doesn't necessarily have to do an entire meditation session. "Anything you can do to get your left brain quiet and get into your body works." Before she does a reading, she sits quietly and imagines an empty box. Then she puts all her chores, worries, house, kids and her job in the box; in other words, anything that reflects who she is--so she doesn't come through in the readings. She then closes the box and puts it away, such as under a bed or in a closet. To prepare herself for a reading, Tedrow used to need just the right room, lighting and surrounding, but now she can put her stuff in the box in a few seconds, clear her mind and open up to whatever spirit is ready to come forward. It just takes practice.

During one of the development circles, Tedrow brought a friend so her students could have a chance to to do a reading themselves. Stacy Smith was a childhood friend of Tedrow and was happy to be the first guinea pig. After taking about 15 minutes to meditate and put aside all of their "personal stuff," the group was ready to focus on Smith. They sat quietly and wrote whatever came to mind first. "Just listen to your gut," said Tedrow. She suggested that if they hit a block to just scribble in circles or lines or whatever is comfortable. Just like writing or journaling, scribbling can release the flow of thought. When everyone was done they took turns doing a reading on Smith. Everyone touched on some small aspect of Smith's life, but the owner of the store, Tom McGuire, was amazingly accurate. He said he felt a lot of sadness surrounding her and could see many babies that had passed. In fact Smith had experienced seven miscarriages at different stages of pregnancy with one nearly full-term baby that was stillborn.

> *"Everyone has a different interpretation about hearing messages from the dead. Christians would say it's the voice of God, mediums would say you're having a spiritual awakening and atheists would say you are crazy."*
>
> — A former large who is now a medium.

Participants at the Cosmic Corral's 2nd Annual "Mind Body Spirit" event.

Tedrow said that this gift is not limited to any one person. Everyone has the gift. Some people can talk to spirit from the time they were children and some people have to learn it. But everyone has the ability to be their own medium. "Every reading I've ever done, they already had the message before we even sat down together." Tedrow explained that unless someone is really skeptical and does not believe in an afterlife, they already have that connection. To make your own connection you have to listen to your own intuition. You don't need anyone to do that for you.

An awakening usually follows some sort of personal loss, but not always. It could be the loss of a loved -one, a divorce, or near-death experience. Bellows-Macorro lost her fiancé, Vern, three weeks before they were to walk down the aisle. She came from a cynical point of view and was very involved in the material world. She doubted Heaven was real. But when Bellows-Macorro lost her fiancé in an auto accident it shook her world. That's when she began her spiritual journey.

Her first reading was done by a medium who had written a book called *Widowed Too Soon*. Bellows-Macorro contacted the author, Laura Hirsch, and, because Hirsch lived in another state, they arranged to conduct a reading over the phone. Bellows-Macorro was surprised by how much more she enjoyed being on the phone versus a face-to-face meeting. Hirsch explained that she preferred the phone because, by not seeing the person, she can't make any assumptions about their life attributed to age, race or appearance.

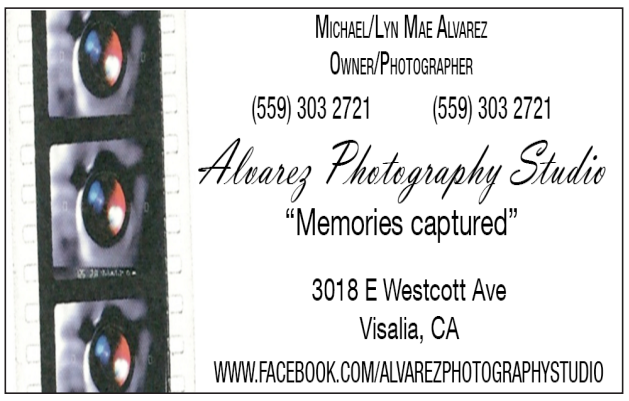
Within the first few minutes of their session, Hirsch told Bellows-Macorro that she saw a wedding ring on its side. Hirsch said, "I'm so sorry we didn't make it to the altar."

A few months later, Bellows-Macorro lost her job and couldn't afford to pay for readings. But Hirsch told her that we are all mediums. We can all tap into our intuition. That's when Bellows-Macorro decided to learn how to do her own readings. She had to work through her own doubts, but soon linked with like -minded people and formed a psychic development group called the Lightworkers Foundation in Fresno. One of the first people she connected with interested in forming the group was Tedrow.

When Tedrow explains how one receives messages from spirit, she describes the four major senses where

**MEDIUMS** continued on **13 »**

## Business Gallery



# Mediums

Continued from p. 12

information can come through. Spirit can talk to you through clairvoyance, which literally means "clear see." This is what you see in your mind's eye. You can strengthen this sense by practicing visualizing objects or facial expressions.

Another sense used when doing a reading is clairaudience, which means "clear hearing." Clairaudience is a stream of thought, but it's not your own thought. It's coming from somewhere else. Tedrow said the more she practiced doing readings, the clearer the words and phrases became and the easier she could tell if it was her voice or spirit. "I turn into an open channel and just listen and get the information I need for the reading." Journaling is the best way to get the messages flowing. "I call it inspirational writing. That's the most important thing I teach in my class. I give everyone a note pad and tell them to write, doodle and draw. If you get stuck and feel like you are not getting anywhere, you can just scribble to get the messages flowing again."

**RECOMMENDED READING**

*Heaven and Earth*
by James Van Praagh

*You Are a Psychic*
by Debra Lynne Katz

*Finding Vern*
by Darcy Bellows-Macorro

*Widowed Too Soon*
by Laura Hirsch

The third sense is clairsentient, or "clear feeling." This is the strongest sense of all. The more empathetic you are, the more you will pick-up on it. With this sense you feel how things are, instead of how you think they are. You have to be in tune with your body and listen to your gut. This is best accomplished through meditation or making a conscious effort to pay attention to how you are feeling. Addiction can interfere with this process because the substance, whether food, alcohol or drugs, prevents a person from feeling. That's usually the desired goal of taking substances in the first place, to not feel. To be a medium you need to pay attention to your feelings and use your emotions as a guidance system. After practicing, it becomes second nature.

The last sense is Clairecognoscente, or "clear knowing." This is the strongest sense for Bellows-Macorro. This sense comes in flashes of intuition. It comes in and out quickly so you can't put your own logic on it. That's one way you can tell the difference between your own thoughts or clairecognoscence. But it's subtle, and Bellows-Macorro had a hard time differentiating when it was intellectual or something coming from spirit. She wondered how she would know if she was just making it up. "The way you can tell between your own thoughts and spirit is if the message comes and goes quickly and would be forgotten if you weren't paying attention. That is a message from spirit. Once you practice being aware and use it, the stronger your claircognoscence gets. But it takes dedication. It's like a muscle and you have to use it every day," said Tedrow.

Participants at the Cosmic Corral's 2nd Annual "Mind Body Spirit" event.

# Tulare County's Oldest Public School to Celebrate 150-Year Anniversary

**Staff Reports**

The oldest public school in Tulare County still operating as an independent school is Outside Creek Elementary School, located south of Farmersville and just west of Exeter at the intersection of Farmersville Blvd. (Road 164) and Avenue 264.

The school was founded during the Civil War, opening its doors on October 10, 1864. Today, the historic school remains a fixture in the small single-school district, serving approximately 125 students a year in a nurturing, hands-on, small-school environment.

A planning committee has started efforts to host a reunion event for the 150-year celebration, which will be held on Saturday, October 11, at the present-day school campus. An opening ceremony with dignitaries is being planned, along with a barbecue luncheon and time to reminisce, share photos and history about the school, and meet alumni and faculty past and present. Donations and sponsors are also needed to help fund the reunion and planning efforts.

"It is an exciting event to help support and plan," said Derrick Bravo, school director and principal. "With alumni coming together from over six different decades to help host the celebration, we are very excited to see this little school recognized for 150 years of educational excellence. We hope everyone will join us for this celebration, and support us in contacting alumni and their friends and family to attend."

"Save the date" cards will be mailed to all alumni who provide an address in late July, and a reunion invitation will be mailed in August.

For more information, contact Derrick Bravo at dbravo@outside-creek.org, call the school at 747-0710, or visit the Outside Creek Swamprats and Eagles alumni Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/192452364179216.

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# Viewpoint

## Laid to Waste: U.S. Depleted Uranium's Toxic Legacy Continues to Endanger Iraqis

**John LaForge**

A new report from the Netherlands based on U.S. Air Force firing coördinates shows that our military fired its armor-piercing munitions made of waste uranium-238 which is called "depleted uranium" or DU into civilian areas of Iraq and at Iraqi troops during the 2003 invasion and occupation, defying the U.S. Air Force's own legal advice that the toxic and radioactive ammunition be used only against hardened targets in compliance with the Laws of War.

The study, "Laid to Waste," by the Dutch organization PAX (www.paxvoorvrede.nl/media/files/pax-rapport-iraq-final-lowres-spread.pdf) found that the lack of legal obligations on U.S.-led militaries in Iraq to help clean-up after using DU weapons has resulted in Iraqi civilians and workers continuing to be exposed to the highly toxic heavy metal years after the war.

The health risks posed by the inadequate management of Iraq's DU contamination are unclear because neither U.S.-led forces nor the Iraqi government have supported health research into civilian DU exposures.

High-risk groups include people living near or working on dozens of Iraqi scrap metal sites where thousands of military vehicles destroyed in the 1991 and 2003 bombardments are stored or processed. Waste sites often lack official oversight and in places it has taken more than 10 years to decontaminate military wreckage from residential neighborhoods. Hundreds of locations that were hit by the weapons, many of which are in populated areas, remain undocumented, and concern among Iraqi civilians over potential health effects from exposure, ingestion and inhalation is widespread.

"To help clean-up, we urgently need to know the location and quantities of DU fired," says the report's author, Wim Zwijnenburg. "The Iraqi government is also in dire need of technical support to help manage the many scrap metal sites where contaminated vehicles are stored," Zwijnenburg said. The ongoing refusal by the United States to release targeting information continues to hinder the assessment and management of DU in Iraq. The Dutch military contributed a few thousand troops to the Coalition Forces in Iraq, and peacekeepers in Kosovo, and raised alarms over contamination in 2001 and 2006. (www.nytimes.com/2001/01/09/world/1999-us-document-warned-of-depleted-uranium-in-kosovo.html; www.bandepleteduranium.org/en/dutch-military-in-iraq-delays-troop-transfer-from )

A handful of U.S. targeting coordinates held by the Dutch Ministry of Defense, and released after a Freedom of Information Act request, show that U.S. war planes used DU weapons against a far wider range of targets and sites than previously suspected, including Iraqi troops. The U.S. and British governments have long asserted that DU is only for use against armored vehicles. They have often been called "tank busters."

Depleted Uranium, a byproduct of uranium enrichment for reactor fuel and H-bombs, is categorized as an intermediate-level radioactive waste; contaminated rubble and scrap metal are considered low-level radioactive waste. The Dutch study finds that international guidelines for dealing with both kinds of waste from the International Commission on Radiological Protection (www.icrp.org) were ignored and that the Iraqi government did not have the technical capacity to safely manage such contamination.

Unlike anti-personnel landmines and other explosive remnants of war, no treaty currently obliges DU users to help clean-up after the war. However, civil radiation protection standards place the responsibility firmly at the foot of the polluters.

Low estimates suggest that at least 440,000 kilograms (488 tons) of DU was fired by the United States in both Gulf Wars in 1991 and 2003. Civilians living near contaminated sites, scrap yard workers, Iraqi doctors and researchers have repeatedly voiced concerns over the effects of DU on health and the environment.

Hans von Sponeck, a former U.N. Assistant Secretary General and U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, told the Guardian last October, "There is definitive evidence of an alarming rise in birth defects, leukemia, cancer and other carcinogenic diseases in Iraq after the war." (www.theguardian.com/environment/earth-insight/2013/oct/13/world-health-organisation-iraq-war-depleted-uranium)

"In 2001, I saw in Geneva how a World Health Organization mission to conduct on-spot assessments in Basra and southern Iraq, where DU had led to devastating environmental health problems, was aborted under U.S. political pressure," Sponeck said.

*John LaForge is a co-director of Nukewatch, a nuclear watchdog and environmental justice group in Wisconsin, edits its quarterly newsletter and writes for PeaceVoice.*

## Beyond the Abyss

**Winslow Myers**

Nothing more clearly illustrates the absurdity of murder for political ends than this moment of chaos in Iraq and Syria. Imagine spaceships of an advanced alien civilization hovering over that vast desert area and assessing the state of our human endeavors on the basis of the welter of alliances and rivalries to-ing and fro-ing below, leaving trails of blood and traumatized children. As borders arbitrarily set by colonial powers a century ago dissolve, the strategic hopes of strong nations are undercut by vicious tribal rivalries going back almost a thousand years. The so-called superpowers are paralyzed, helpless giants armed with useless nuclear weapons. Moral pygmies who initiated unnecessary wars based on shameless lies have the unmitigated gall to blame those in office for events the liars themselves set in motion.

*Time* magazine lays it out as clearly as possible in its June 30 issue; it boggles the mind: the U.S. and Iran support Iraq. Iran, Iraq and Shia militias support Assad. The U.S. and the Gulf States want to contain Iran and prevent it from going nuclear. The Gulf States, the U.S. and Sunni militants want to defeat Assad, but the U.S. and the Gulf States have also sent money and arms to extreme Sunni groups in Syria that intend future harm to the U.S. The Kurds, Iran, the U.S. and Iraq want to defeat ISIS, even as the Kurds have benefited from the chaos created by ISIS. Millions of innocent citizens across the region have been displaced, their children hurt in every way, terrorized and starved, with doctors and teachers and business leaders unable to exercise skills essential to the web of civil society.

All of this bloodletting, confusion and waste has the potential to get much worse because it is unfolding in the context of a planetary moment when our common future is at stake unless we humans can cooperate on a whole new level to find sustainable forms of food and energy. Yet from the perspective of the spaceship, the trackless desert could also be seen as a resource of staggering possibilities. Solar arrays could transform the harshly abundant rays of the sun into power for desalinization plants, preventing future water conflicts. The same solar energy could manufacture hydrogen to power a vibrant economy—a Muslim renaissance. Imagine if the trillions America spent on its Iraq misadventure had gone instead into building such a system. Halliburton, which took a reported $39.5 billion in war profits from that conflict, could have still made billions and actually have done something positive in that part of the world.

When it becomes this difficult to discern who are the good guys and who are the bad, the whole "us and them" paradigm blurs and fades into smoke. The common interest becomes, fundamentally, what's good for children: Syrian, Iraqi, Kurdish, Iranian, Israeli, American. Brought up short by the helplessness of being unable to distinguish between alliances and enemies, is this not the moment for us to say enough—how much greater proof do we need that war and murder never work? Instead, there is an all-too-pervasive climate of opinion in the American government-industrial-media complex that more war and murder are the only answer to war and murder.

How to respond to evil and chaos with something other than more evil and chaos is one of the great historical conundrums. But one part of the answer is the nature of this moment, in the largest perspective of the unfolding of geological time. More and more of us are defining our primary identity not in terms of nation or tribe or religion, but instead in terms of the whole delicate, gorgeous, threatened planet now seen as the outcome of billions of years of evolutionary development. This is new—an encompassing story that has enormous potential to unite the diversity of humans into a larger community.

Meanwhile a hierarchy of needs still operates, and the primary need of the torn-apart Middle East is security, in the bare-bones form of simple cessation of slaughter. It would make zero sense to approach a young, fiery Kalashnikov-wielding adherent of ISIS and plead that he look up at the stars: "Look at who you really are, a descendent of these trillions of galaxies. It is out of this one unfolding universe that our sacred texts of Islam and Christianity and Judaism arose. We are one species. Shia and Sunnis may have a long history of enmity, but go back far enough and they are one, polarized by abstract illusions of difference that are meaningless in terms of this astronomical creativity out of which you came."

This felt sense of oneness is the great message that bears in upon us from both our biggest challenges and our biggest opportunities—challenges like ocean acidification, rain forest destruction or nuclear proliferation, opportunities for vast networks of communication and understanding represented by the Internet. Global climate chaos encompasses not just physical weather but spiritual weather as well. Though the horrors of Iraq and Syria represent a sickening step backward from the possibility of reconciliation among the tribes and religions of the world, the context of reconciliation surrounds us and points the way ahead, supporting and guiding our creativity toward a world that works for everyone. Great possibilities are known, but the wrong voices are loudest. Let us listen for the smarter, smaller, softer, kinder ones.

*Winslow Myers, author of* Living Beyond War: A Citizen's Guide*, writes on global issues for PeaceVoice and serves on the Advisory Board of the War Prevention Initiative.*

## Stella's Story

*During the June 3rd Tulare County Supervisors' meeting, Stella Velasquez gave the following testimony during public comment.*

I'm in a profession that would make many in management nervous. I'm a 911 dispatcher. This past January was my 30th year. Even after 30 years I have continued my training and continue to get certified by the state. I have received the Tulare County Sheriff's "Dispatcher of the Year" award twice, once in 1991 and again in 2013. I was also awarded the Tulare County "Valley Hero" award in 2013.

But what makes me most proud is going into the Tulare County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) dungeon for 10, 12 or 14 hours nightly for the past 30 years and doing a job not everybody is able to do. My number one goal is to make sure that every law enforcement unit, whether deputy, detective or police officer, goes home safe at the end of the day. In my 30 years I've attended too many funerals for our law enforcement. I've attended many memorials and still shed tears like it was yesterday. I have many hidden scars.

There are still certain types of calls that scare me and I say many silent prayers for everybody involved. Being able to help hysterical, frightened or screaming citizens, holding their hand by staying on the phone with them until help arrives, and then hearing their sigh of relief is rewarding and stressful. Sometimes I hear a thank you and sometimes a click of the phone as they just disconnect. But it's OK because I know my cavalry showed up. Yes MY, because as dispatchers we claim every unit as ours and we will do everything in our power to keep them safe, as well as every citizen. It's an extremely stressful yet satisfying profession that many have tried to do but fall short.

Over my 30 years I've been told by others they could never do my job and ask how I do it. Many of my law enforcement family have told us "thank you" or "good job," especially after a crazy night. What we're asking, what I'm asking, is to be recognized and paid for the job, the profession we do. I had to ask a fellow employee when our last raise was because I just walk in everyday and do my job. I was told 2008 and that was over a three-year period. We are still the most underpaid county for our profession. The board of supervisors did care in 2008 by awarding us the raise that we deserved along with assistance on our medical. I want to thank you for that. But I'm asking that you take another look at your dedicated, valuable employees. Don't take away from us now. Show us that you do listen and that you do care by awarding us the raise that we deserve along with the assistance on our medical. Thank you.

*[insert clever message here]*

# Columns & Letters

## '15 Ji-had Style Bases in this USA'

Ref your subject article on date.

Just happened to pick up one of your pubs and cann't help wondering/asking which one of your people wrote the article about 'Bundy/BLM'?

It led me to another article from another paper that most of our colleges are liberal teaching facilities poisoning our students with mind/future destroying instructions. Was the article author a graduate from one of those colleges?

The BLM is an org that likes to sneak in and steal things from law abiding citizens when they are not looking or have been brain washed.

If you had done your background work on good journalism you would have discovered Senator Read, and others had his hand in the BLM and was signing the property over to the Chineese for solar farms, etc.,

Then after reading further you might have found out that the Chineese would then have authority to import any number of military personnel to protect that property.

This is the way the muslim infiltration is happening, sneaky like, and their reported 15 ji-had style bases in this USA

*Ray Phillipson*

**Editor's note:** Now that the *Valley Voice* is receiving many more letters than previously, we'd like to state the obvious by saying that it is not our policy to edit your editorials. Bear this in mind, therefore, when writing us--so please be lucid.

## Online Comments

Comment at ourvalleyvoice.com or fb.me/ourvalleyvoice

"The BOS doesn't seem to care that Tulare County incurs all the costs and effort to train people for other agencies, in that new hires work long enough to get trained and have a year's experience under their belts, then leave for better paying jobs elsewhere. There's a revolving door in many departments, and it's very true in the 9-1-1 dispatch center that I've worked in for 20 years. We've been chronically understaffed for years, the turnover rate is high, and service to the public suffers. From longer times to answer 9-1-1 calls, to fatigue, it's always a challenge to maintain an acceptable level of response to the public and our officers. To be refused a raise, after the Board has given themselves and upper management sizable increases, is both insulting and unconscionable. The county seems to think the people who actually do the work are nothing more than 'trained monkeys' who can be replaced at the drop of a hat. Do the right thing, BOS, and give the workers at least the same thing you gave yourselves."

***— Jim Reeves, on County Employees Fight for First Raise Since 2008***

"The employee evaluations are a joke! I have also received the same speech that no one can get above a 5 or 6 unless supporting documentation and proof is submitted. Management in our office is unwilling to do so. Some of our board members believe that we are ignorant folk, so not true! Our county employees deserve better! They only way I can fathom getting a COLA is by going to work for another county or trying to get promoted! I do applaud the two supervisors for not accepting raises during the Great Recession. I think it was the noble thing to do. Now it is time to honor the county employees with a fair contract!"

***— James, on County Employees Fight for First Raise Since 2008***

"DON'T STRIKE! IT'S NOT WORTH IT TULARE COUNTY!!!! Fresno County went on strike. We not only lost a weeks worth of pay, we lost our homes, our cars and are just catching up on bills 3 years later. What happened to our contract? WE STILL DON'T HAVE ONE! Don't let SEIU convince you to go on strike. SEIU won't lose money my frineds, they'll receive OT and bonuses while your check shrinks. Do you know how much one of our co-workers received from the strike fund? $35 to help cover $900 in rent and a $300 car payment."

***— Zuhp Aliser, on County Employees Fight for First Raise Since 2008***

"We have to be careful not to make a generalization about SEIU. The folks that we have now that are working with Tulare County to help get the 3400 hundreds workers a equity adjustment after six (6) going on seven (7) years are dedicated, hardworking employees. I'm not disagreeing with Zuhp and Debi above. I'm not trying to minimize what happened to them. I'm just saying that we have some real dedicated hardworking employees from SEIU, including Jo Ann Salazar and Courtney Hawkins that are giving their heart and soul to help the workers from Tulare County receive a COLA. We have no advocates in Tulare County Government at the present time. We do appreciate the help and support from the community of Tulare County. "We the People", are working for you to make Tulare County a better place to live, work and worship."

***— Kermit Wullschleger, on County Employees Fight for First Raise Since 2008***

"The entire system is a joke. SEIU doesn't even have an email address for the local chapter. The Board of Supervisors act as if they are above it all. I have a simple solution. Have SEIU use their lawyers to write and submit a ballot measure in Tulare County that has these simple provisions.

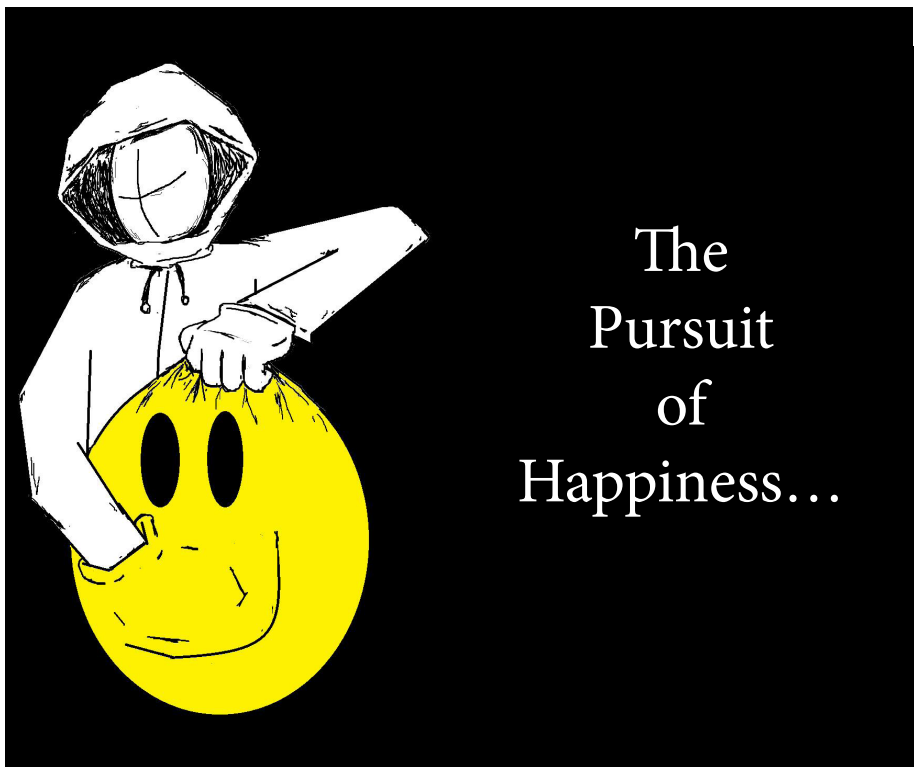
1. The Board of Supervisors shall be paid no more than the average salary of the working citizens of Tulare County.
2. The Board of Supervisors will not receive any expenses, perks or additional compensation in any form including retirement other than any other county employee.
3. The Board of Supervisors shall not have the power change this law without a majority vote of the citizens of this county.

Well there you have it SEIU. Do you want to support the working class of this county or do you want to play the hush hush let's make a deal with the board?"

***— Tom, on County Employees Fight for First Raise Since 2008***

## Black Tie

**Alex Oldenbourg**




### Veteran's Corner

## Compensation Benefits for Dependents

**Joe Wright**

A prominent condition affecting Gulf War Veterans is a cluster of medically unexplained chronic symptoms that can include fatigue, headaches, joint pain, indigestion, insomnia, dizziness, respiratory disorders and memory problems. VA refers to these illnesses as "chronic multi-symptom illness" and "undiagnosed illnesses." The term "Gulf War Syndrome" is used when referring to medically unexplained symptoms reported by Gulf War Veterans.

Gulf War Veterans who meet the criteria below do not need to prove a connection between their military service and illnesses in order to receive VA disability compensation. VA presumes certain chronic, unexplained symptoms existing for six months or more are related to Gulf War service without regard to cause. These "presumptive" illnesses must have appeared during active duty in the Southwest Asia theater of military operations or by December 31, 2016, and be at least 10% disabling.

Illnesses include: Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, a condition of long-term and severe fatigue that is not relieved by rest and is not directly caused by other conditions. Fibromyalgia, a condition characterized by widespread muscle pain. Other symptoms may include insomnia, morning stiffness, headache and memory problems. Functional gastrointestinal disorders, a group of conditions marked by chronic or recurrent symptoms related to any part of the gastrointestinal tract. Functional condition refers to an abnormal function of an organ, without a structural alteration in the tissues. Examples include irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), functional dyspepsia and functional abdominal pain syndrome. Undiagnosed illnesses with symptoms that may include but are not limited to: abnormal weight loss, fatigue, cardiovascular disease, muscle and joint pain, headache, menstrual disorders, neurological and psychological problems, skin conditions, respiratory disorders and sleep disturbances.

Gulf War Veterans may be eligible for a variety of VA benefits, including a Gulf War Registry health exam, health care, and disability compensation for diseases related to military service.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran ID cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com.

*Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 852-2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.*

### FACEBOOK RESPONSE

"So Gurrola still has nothing specific to offer, and won't until after talking to people on some advisory committee after she is elected? That is the option we have to the do nothing Ennis? Omg."

***— Barry Caplan, on District 5 Goes to a Runoff***

## Send us your Letters to the Editor

208 W. Main, Ste. E, Visalia, CA 93291

editor@ourvalleyvoice.com

# Library for London Project Finds Building and Location

**Steve Pastis**

An effort is underway to establish a library in London, an underserved community of 2,134 in northern Tulare County.

"The overall purpose for this library is not just simple literacy but to improve the lives of the people of London," said Robert Isquierdo, the main force behind the Library for London Project. Community organizations such as Citizens for a Better London, Proteus, Jaron Ministries International, First Baptist Kingsburg and Kings River Elementary are also active in the effort.

"Studies have shown that the presence of a library in a community increases academic performance and literacy rates," Isquierdo explained. "I felt this was a big need in our community."

Although he left London in 1991 to attend college in Santa Monica and the Bay Area, and is now a teacher in Santa Clarita, Isquierdo remembers growing up in London.

"It can be a struggle there because of the environment, but it also can be rewarding because as small as it is, it's like a family watching over each other," he said. "I felt like I was finally in a position to give back, so I decided to give back to the community that raised me."

The project's goal is to open "a fully functional library" in London, with a computer center providing Internet access, and "an adult literacy center for people who did not have an opportunity to finish school as children and are now in the work force," said Isquierdo. Plans also call for a study center, where high school and college students, along with junior high students, can work on school research papers.

Robert Isquierdo shares the joy of reading with a class of young students.

Following a Facebook campaign and events such as a book drive, a library location on Avenue 364 was found about two weeks ago. Plans call for the property to be leased to the library, and for a cement foundation to be created there to accommodate the 30' x 24' portable building donated by the Dinuba Unified School District. The building served as a classroom for about 15 years.

So far, more than 15,000 books have been collected for the library, exceeding the original goal of 5,000 to 10,000. "We have to sift through the books and decide which ones are a good fit for our library," Isquierdo said, adding that the rest will go to home libraries in the community.

About 500 to 1,000 of the London Library's books will be in Spanish, according to Isquierdo. "Our priority is to offer Spanish language literature, but we will try and cover as many genres as possible," he said.

The Library for London Project is not yet eligible for library grants, explained Isquierdo. "The criteria is that you already have to be established. The concern is that if you don't follow through, then the money is lost."

The Library for London Project currently needs money for the cement foundation, estimated to cost between $3,000-$5,000. "We also need money to hire a full time certified librarian," said Isquierdo, adding that this person would oversee a team of volunteers. Another expense for the new library is utilities.

To help raise money toward meeting these expenses, the Library for London Project 5K Run/Walk & Kids' Fun Run is planned for Saturday, July 27th. The event, which starts at 8am at Kate Road and Denver Avenue in London, will feature celebrity runner Fernando Cabada, an eight-time Team USA member and former 25K record holder.

"A goal of this event is to bring people into London to see all of the positive things that are happening, in order to redefine its reputation," said Isquierdo.

For more information about the Library for London Project or to register for the July 27th event, call Robert Isquierdo at (818) 482-8140, email libraryforlondon@yahoo.com or visit www.libraryforlondon.com.

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# Local July 4th Events to Feature Fireworks, Music, Food, Crafts, Walks/Runs, Games and Reptiles

**Staff Reports**

Tulare and Kings counties will once again celebrate Independence Day in style. A variety of daytime celebrations, followed by evening fireworks displays, have been scheduled throughout the area.

The Woodlake Kiwanis will help start things off with their Woodlake July 3rd Blast on Thursday. The celebration will be held at Miller Brown Park in downtown Woodlake. Vendors, kids games, bounce houses, music and events will be featured. The evening ends with a fireworks display. For more information, visit woodlakekiwanis.com.

The City of Exeter begins its Friday holiday schedule with its Fourth of July in the Park, from 7am-3pm. Events feature live entertainment, a pancake breakfast, 10k run and 2-mile walk, a horseshoe tournament, face painting, mini train rides, a petting zoo, Reptile Ron's live reptile show, arts & crafts and food booths, and a fireworks display presented by the Lions Club at Lions Stadium, just east of town on Rocky Hill Drive. The fireworks show will begin at dusk (about 8:45-9pm). Concessions will be available and ice chests are discouraged. Donations are encouraged since this is the only source of revenue for the show, which will cost the club more than $10,000. Lion Paul Evans, the club's licensed pyrotechnician, organizes and runs the show. This is one of a few shows that is still lit by hand and not electronically. For more information, contact the Exeter Chamber of Commerce at 592-2919 or visit www.exeterchamber.com.

The Visalia Parks & Recreation Foundation, in partnership with the City of Visalia, will present the annual Freedom Celebration on Friday, July 4, at Giant Chevrolet Mineral King Bowl, 1001 W. Main St. Gates open at 6:30pm, with a spectacular fireworks presentation at 9pm. Local favorite Run 4 Cover will perform, and concessions will be available. No ice chests or outside food and beverages are allowed. A donation of $3 per person is requested, but admission is free. For more information, call 713-4599.

The Hanford Chamber of Commerce will present "Proud to be an American" at Earl F. Johnson Park beginning at noon with kids' activities, a car show, food booths and a beer garden. A fireworks show will be held at Hanford High School Neighbor Bowl at 9pm. Gates open at 6pm, and kids activities and food will be available. For more information, call the chamber at 582-0483.

The Annual 4th of July Celebration at Lemoore City Parks kicks off with the Firecracker Fun Run at 7am. Check-in begins at 6am, the race is at 7am. Registration is $20. After the race, the American Legion will hold a breakfast. Music, live entertainment, water games, bounce houses, food and craft vendors and more are featured. Admission is free. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

Tachi Palace in Lemoore will host a free firework celebration beginning at 5pm on Friday with a mini-carnival, bounce house and live music in the outdoor pavilion. Lawn chairs and coolers are allowed, but no glass bottles or alcohol will be permitted. For information, visit tachipalace.com.

Exeter's fireworks show is one of a few that are still lit by hand.

Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks will also welcome you on July 4th, but their recent press releases make it clear that fireworks are prohibited for safety reasons. People in possession of fireworks in the parks are subject to a maximum fine of $5,000 and/or 6 months in jail.

The parks suggest that, "To enjoy fireworks, consider attending a fireworks show in a neighboring community."

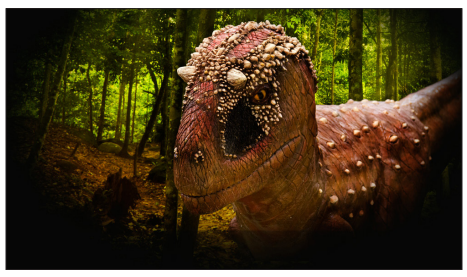
## Dinosaurs to Take Over Visalia Convention Center July 12-13

**Staff Reports**

"Discover the Dinosaurs" is coming to the Visalia Convention Center, 303 E. Acequia Ave., on July 12-13. This hands-on exhibit showcases museum-quality pieces along with several moving animatronic dinosaurs, all in a fun and educational environment. Kids and families are encouraged to get up close and touch some of the dinosaurs on display, an opportunity that isn't usually available in museum exhibits and other dinosaur events.

In addition to the exhibit, other activities included in admission price are the Dino Dig, Dino Den play area, Dino coloring area, scavenger hunt, and Dino Theater. Several other attractions including gem and fossil panning, face painting, dinosaur inflatables, mini golf, and Dino rides are available for additional charge.

Discover the Dinosaurs engages the imaginations of kids to learn, gives them the hands-on opportunity to touch a dinosaur, actually ride on the back of a T-rex, and experience other fun activities and attractions that make spending the day with dinosaurs fun for all ages.


The exhibit showcases animatronic dinosaurs.

The exhibit runs 9am to 9pm on Saturday, and 10am to 7pm on Sunday. Admission is $18 for teens and adults, $16 for seniors (65+), $16 or $22 for children (2-11), and children under 2 are admitted free. Individual ride tickets may be purchased for $5 or $6.

For more information, visit www.discoverthedinosaurs.com.

## Rodney Atkins to Perform at the Visalia Fox Theatre on July 13th

**Staff Reports**

As part of the Budweiser Concert Series, Rodney Atkins will take the stage of the Visalia Fox Theatre for a 7:30pm show on Sunday, July 13th.

The east Tennessee native has an impressive track record with hitting on sentiments that strike a chord with the country listener. Atkins has sold over four million singles in the past five years alone. He had six number one hits from his first three albums, from "Watching You" and "These Are My People" to more recent smashes, "Take a Back Road" and "Farmer's Daughter," which quickly skyrocketed to platinum.

"The biggest challenge is finding the kind of songs that really set you apart," Atkins explained. "You have to figure out what it is you came here to say and stick to that. I think you live and learn. I want to record songs that won't just be around for a little while. I look for stories people relate to – you don't want to be thinking about listening to a song, you want to be inside of it. It's like watching a movie.

Rodney Atkins

"With any successful song, you've got to sit back and ask yourself, why did this song connect?" he continued. "With a lot of songs, the approach is about how perfect things are or how messed up things are – it's one or the other. For me, real life is the ups and downs, and if I can, I like to get both sides of that in a song."

Tickets are $35-$75 and available at foxvisalia.org.

## Tulare County Symphony Names Juliette de Campos as Executive Director

**Donna Orozco**

Juliette de Campos is the new executive director of the Tulare County Symphony. De Campos, who started her new position on Tuesday, most recently served as the director of operations for the Community Water Center, a non-profit organization focused on California water policy. The Tulare County native brings with her over 15 years of experience in non-profit administration, community development and fundraising.

De Campos replaces Francie Levy, who is moving to Paso Robles this summer.

De Campos grew up on a farm southeast of Tulare, where, she says, summers spent working in the fields instilled in her the importance of a good education. In 1995, she graduated Magna Cum Laude from UCLA with a bachelor's degree in political science and an emphasis in international economic development. After spending two years in Africa, de Campos returned to the Valley in 1998 and went to work for the Tulare County Redevelopment Agency as a community development specialist. Her accomplishments in economic development ultimately led to the position of district director with U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein. De Campos specialized in agriculture and water issues in a region covering 16 counties in the Central Valley.

Juliette de Campos

While the leap from a non-profit organization focused on public policy to one vested in the arts may seem unlikely, de Campos says the decision reflects her own professional evolution.

**SYMPHONY** continued on **23 »**

# Center Stage Strings Music Camp & Festival Marks Fifth Season

**Staff Reports**

Center Stage Strings, one of North America's premier classical music camps, returns to the Santa Teresita Youth Center in Three Rivers with a lineup of world class faculty members and a growing tribe of enthusiastic students, 30 of them this year, who will arrive from all over the United States with their violins, violas and cellos strapped to their backs and ready to play.

Danielle Belen

Now in its fifth year, Center Stage Strings occupies a small but increasingly prestigious niche in the music world. Unlike many music camps, which emphasize large ensemble and orchestral playing, instruction there focuses on virtuoso solo performance and small chamber groups. This focus places high demands on faculty, and even higher demands on students. Before being admitted to the camp, students undergo a rigorous examination and audition process, and the truth is you have to be really, really good to be accepted. Camp this year will run through July 20.

Violinists, violists and cellists ages 8-19 were selected nationwide by audition to attend. They will perform works by a variety of composers.

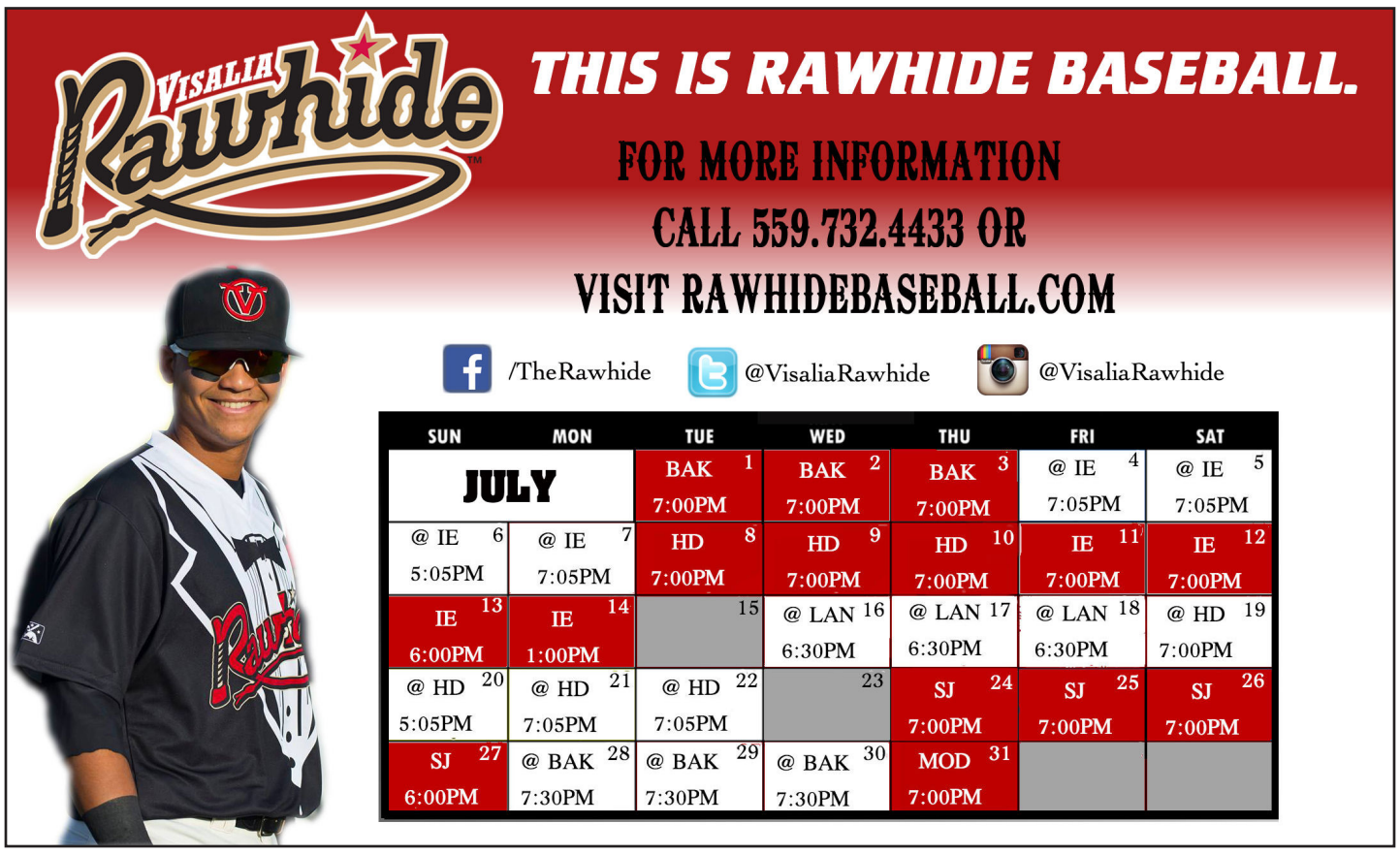
Once the camp begins, students receive several personal, one-on-one lessons per week, then practice for five or six hours every day, many of them taking up daytime residence in one of fifteen PractiCubes that were designed and built for this purpose in Three Rivers.

A good deal of every student's time is spent preparing for public concerts and master classes (which are also open to the public). This year, there are six free student concerts, including three Sunday afternoon matinees at 3pm and three casual Brown Bag Lunch performances on Fridays at 12:15pm.

In addition to student concerts, Center Stage Strings will present five professional faculty concerts. Some of the performers include award winning violinist Danielle Belen, Naumberg Prize-winning cellist David Requiro, and one of the music world's foremost violinists, internationally acclaimed Stefan Jackiw, who will be joined by pianist Jennie Jung.

The musical programs cover the gamut from Haydn and Mozart in the Classical Era, Mendelssohn in the Romantic, Impressionist Claude Debussy, the defiant Russians Shostakovich and Prokofiev, all the way to the modernist Witold Lutoslawski. All evening concerts will be held in the comfort of the air-conditioned Main Chapel at St. Anthony Retreat, with free performances in the casual Main Hall at the Youth Center, also air-conditioned.

Tickets are $12 for evening concerts and are available online, at Chump's DVDs in Three Rivers, and at the door. For more information, including a complete event calendar, visit www.CenterStageStrings.com or call 909-6900.

Alabama

# Alabama to Headline Tachi Palace

Alabama will headline a 7:30pm concert on Friday, July 11, at Tachi Palace in Lemoore on its All American Tour.

It's been more than 40 years since a trio of young cousins left Fort Payne, Alabama, to spend the summer playing in a Myrtle Beach, South Carolina bar called The Bowery. It took Randy Owen, Teddy Gentry and Jeff Cook six long years of tip jars and word of mouth to earn the major label deal they'd been dreaming of, but then seemingly no time at all to change the face of country music.

Alabama have had 43 #1 singles including 21 #1 singles in a row, a record that will probably never be equaled in any genre. They brought youthful energy and a rocking edge that broadened country's audience and opened the door to self-contained bands from then on, and they undertook a journey that led, 73 million albums later, to the Country Music Hall of Fame and the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Of the early days and their humble beginnings, Cook recalled, "I don't think we thought too far ahead. We were more concerned with paying our bills at the end of the week playing music."

The Bowery was a chance to get established outside their home turf, where they'd played a nearby theme park, opening for national acts like Bobby Bare.

"We believed we had something pretty special from a vocal standpoint," said Gentry, "and we were looking for the opportunity to prove it. There were a lot of times when we wondered whether we might be better off going back home and getting jobs, but we just kept rehearsing and writing songs, trying to get better and believing we could do it."

"I went to see them at The Bowery," said producer Harold Shedd, "and the sound that these three guys could create together was just really something. I saw the crowd reacting to music they'd never heard before as though they had. They were doing some covers, but a lot of the Alabama show at the time was original material, including stuff that wound up on the first three albums we did together."

The band was revolutionary in more than one sense.

"We were renegades in sneakers and T-shirts," said Gentry. "We had long hair and played loud and some of the country folks resisted us for a while. But then, of course, they did accept us and then after that, our success made it lots easier for other bands to try it in country music."

The fact that some of the heirs of that legacy--Eli Young Band, Rascal Flatts and Florida Georgia Line--were among the stars paying tribute on *Alabama & Friends*, their most recent release, is part of their legacy as surely as the awards and plaudits they've earned through the years. And those, of course, have been legion. They include more than 150 major industry nods, including two Grammys, the Minnie Pearl Humanitarian award, Entertainer of the Year awards three times from the CMA and five times from the ACM, as well as the latter's Artist of the Decade award. They earned 21 gold, platinum and multi-platinum albums and were named the RIAA's Country Group of the Century.

But awards are only a part of a legacy that finds its most important home in the hearts of listeners everywhere. Some of those are superstars in other genres, as Owen found out not long ago.

"I was part of a benefit concert at the Ryman," he said, "and I look over there's Jon Bon Jovi. He walked over and said hello and it turns out he likes our music."

Many more, of course, are everyday country fans.

"A lot of fans will start a conversation with, 'I don't want to bother you,'" says Cook, "but what they don't understand is that everything that's happened to us, every one of those awards, happened because we've been accepted and supported by our fans."

Not long ago, Gentry was witness to a scene that shows that their legacy of song remains as fresh as it was when that streak in the '80s kicked it all off.

"I was in Nashville," he said, "walking by this club full of young people--I'm talking 18 or 20. The band started playing 'Dixieland Delight' and everybody in the place started singing and sang all the way through. I had to smile at the longevity of the songs. Maybe some of those kids didn't even know who Alabama was, but they knew the music, and so I think that's a tribute to the fact that we spent a career putting out good songs that stand the test of time."

Tickets are $40 to $150, and are available at tachipalace.com.

# Velouria Records Concert Fundraiser for Adam Furtado Set for July 18

**Staff Reports**

Velouria Records will present a concert fundraiser for Adam Furtado on Friday, July 18, at The Cellar Door in Visalia. In early May, Furtado was the victim of an attack while taking out the trash behind Velouria Records on Main Street in Visalia. All money will go towards helping him pay his medical bills while recovering from his injuries.

foot of feathers

Three local bands, foot of feathers, Ocher and Slow Season, will be showcased that evening.

Visalia's foot of feathers has been playing the Valley steadily for the past 10 years. Their sound is stuck somewhere between 60s pop and indie rock. If you like the Beatles, Badfinger, Big Star and Built to Spill, foot of feathers may be right up your alley.

Visalia natives, Ocher deliver an updated slant on loud 90's influenced indie guitar rock, often times compared to the Dinosaur Jr. Ocher cites trips through the mountains and skateboarding as major influences on their songwriting.

Visalia-based, hard-rocking Slow Season makes you want to bust out your Zeppelin and Grand Funk records and sport the denim bells you've been stashing in the closet. Slow Season has been sweating up and down the state and will soon be breaking eardrums in Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Arkansas and Alabama when they tour in August.

The benefit starts at 9pm. The Cellar Door is located at 101 W. Main St. in Visalia. The price of admission is a donation to Adam at the door.

Tiny Ruins (Hollie Fullbrook)

# New Zealand's Tiny Ruins to Perform in Downtown Visalia July 12

**Aaron Gomes**

Tiny Ruins, which will headline The Cellar Door in Visalia on Saturday, July 12, is the project of Auckland, New Zealand musician and songwriter Hollie Fullbrook. Many critics liken her fingerstyle guitar approach and songwriting stance to the elegant Nick Drake.

Born in Bristol, England, in 1985, Fullbrook learned the cello at an early age and, at 10, moved with her family to New Zealand. Teaching herself the guitar through her teens, she traveled alone in the U.S. for a while before moving to Wellington, New Zealand, in 2005, where she studied and wrote music for theater productions. Sharing rough tape-recorded demos of her songs with music-minded friends, they garnered attention from beyond New Zealand's shores. In 2010, she was asked to fly to Sydney, Australia, to support Scottish folksinger Alasdair Roberts, and was then duly signed by influential indie label Spunk Records.

"From time to time an album comes along that stops you in your tracks and demands you to listen," read a review in *The New Zealand Herald*. "Tiny Ruins' *Some Were Meant for Sea* is one such record." The Australian press was also smitten, with the magazine *Mess & Noise* noting, "The songs sway and heave with warmth and approachability."

The album saw a U.K. release after being championed by BBC 6 and BBC 2. It was hailed by the BBC World Service program "The Strand" as one of the top five albums of 2011.

Los Angeles-based singer, multi-instrumentalist and songwriter Børns, who will open the show, is the newest addition to an agency that in recent years has launched careers for Foster the People, Alt-J and many others. Garrett Børns is a songwriting performer you will be hearing about in the very near future. Catch him now, while you still can.

Tickets for the 8pm 21+ show are $7.

**NEXT DEADLINE:**
**10 JULY 2014**

# Summerland Tour 2014 to Make Stop at Visalia Fox Theatre on July 20

Some of the biggest Top 40 alternative rock bands from the 1990s – Soul Asylum (pictured above), Everclear, Eve 6 and Spacehog – will perform at the Visalia Fox Theatre at 7pm on Sunday, July 20, as part of their Summerland Tour 2014. Proceeds from the show will benefit the Sound N Vision Foundation, the Visalia Arts Consortium and the Visalia Opera Company. For tickets, $25-55, visit foxvisalia.org. (More information in our July 17th issue.)

# ImagineU Announces Summer Activities

**Donna Orozco**

Rocket launches, animals from Chaffee Zoo and panning for gold are some of the activities being offered at the Summer Camp offered by ImagineU Children's Museum in Visalia from July 22-25.

ImagineU will be offering arts and crafts classes.

Watercolor painting classes with award-winning watercolorist Kacey Fansett will be offered Tuesday.

The cost for each class is $3 for members and $8 for non-members. Each class is limited to 20 children. Pre-registration and prepayment are required.

**Tuesday, July 22** – Watercolor painting with award-winning watercolorist Kacey Fansett at 10am and noon. Arts and crafts with Garden Street Studio at 2pm.

**Wednesday, July 23** – Touch and interact with animals from the Fresno Chaffee Zoo at 10 and 11:30am. Construct a bottle rocket and watch it blast off at 2pm.

**Thursday, July 24** – Create your own ceramics with Sherley Tucker at 10am and noon. Learn how to drum, taught by Eric Anderson, at 2pm.

**Friday, July 25** – Travel back to the Old West and pan for gold. Choose from five different times: 10 and 11:30am, 2:45 and 4:20pm, and also during Family Night at 6:40pm. Cost for the gold panning is $10 for members and $12 for non-members.

ImagineU will continue Family Nights on the fourth Friday in July and August from 6-8pm. Family Nights were created for those who aren't able to attend the museum during regular hours. The cost is the same as regular admittance: $5 for adults and children 2 and over, and free for children under 2.

Special activities are planned every day at ImagineU. For registration or more information, call 733-5975 or visit www.imagineumuseum.org.

# MUSIC

## July

**Through-August 29 – Rockin' the Arbor – 6-10pm**
On Friday nights, Tachi Palace Hotel & Casino will present Rockin' the Arbor, featuring live music, food vendors and family activities at 300 E Street. Featured bands include: Motel Drive, July 11; Roadhouse July 18; Prestige July 25; 82 Deluxe Aug. 1; Midnight Wine August 8; Force 'Em Aug. 15; Rockville Aug. 22; and The Fabulous Enchantments Aug. 29. For information, call 924-6401.

**July 3 – Master Class by Cellist David Requiro – 6:30pm**
Master Cellist David Requiro will work with budding virtuosos at Santa Teresita Youth Center, 43816 Sierra Drive in Three Rivers. For information, visit CenterStageStrings.com.

**July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 – 3's A Crowd – 7-10pm**
On Thursdays, 3's A Crowd performs at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

**July 4, 11, 18 – Brown Bag Lunch Performances – 12:15pm**
Bring lunch and listen to music by the students of the Santa Teresita Youth Center in Three Rivers. Admission is Free. For information, visit CenterStageStrings.com.

**July 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26 – The Crawdads – 7-10pm**
Every Friday and Saturday Keith and the Crawdads perform at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

**July 4 – Tim Mattos – 8-10pm**
Tim Mattos will perform at Farmer's Fury, 358 West D, Lemoore. For information, visit farmersfurywines.com.

**July 4 – AJM Band – 9:30pm**
AJM Band will perform a Red, White and Blues show in the Koy Wae Lounge of Tachi Palace Hotel and Casino in Lemoore. For information, visit reverbnation.com.

**July 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26 – The 2nd Floor Night Club – 10pm-2am**
Every Friday and Saturday, the second floor of Crawdaddys Visalia offers deejays and dancing. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

**July 5 – Chamber Music Extravaganza – 7:30pm**
Center Stage Strings faculty will present a memorable evening of chamber music at St. Anthony Retreat Chapel of Three Rivers. The performance is part of the Summer Music Festival July 1-20. Tickets are $12 or $50 for all concerts. For information, visit CenterStageStrings.com.

**July 5 – 2 Love or 2 Hate – 8-10pm**
Sound N Vision Foundation will present 2 Love or 2 Hate and Burning Bridges at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. Tickets for this 21+ concert are $6. For tickets and information, visit snvfoundation.org.

**July 6, 13, 20, 27 – Sunday Jam – 7-10pm**
On Sunday nights, a jam-session with the Crawdad's is featured at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. Special guests and local talent have been known to sit in. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

**July 8 – Master Class by Violinist Danielle Belen – 6:30pm**
Master Violinist Danielle Belen will work with budding virtuosos at Santa Teresita Youth Center, 43816 Sierra Dr. in Three Rivers. For information, visit CenterStageStrings.com.

**July 8, 15, 22, 29 – The Crawdads with Cody Torres – 7-10pm**
On Tuesdays, Cody Torres performs with the Crawdads at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

**July 9, 16, 23, 30 – KJUG Country Music night – 7-10pm**
Every Wednesday David Laswell and the Rounders perform at KJUG Country Music Night Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

**July 11 – Ron Thompson & the Resisters at Blues, Brews & BBQ – 6-10pm**
Budweiser will present this free concert at Garden Street Plaza in Downtown Visalia. Ice cold drinks and BBQ will be available for purchase.

**July 11 – Springville Concerts in the Park – 7-9pm**
Lake Bottom will perform at the Springville Concerts in the Park. Bring lawn chairs, blankets and refreshments. For information, visit thecenterofspringville.com.

**July 11 – Alabama - All American Tour – 7:30pm**
Alabama will perform at Tachi Palace. Tickets, $40, $50, $60, $70, $85, $150, are available at tachipalace.com.

**July 11 – Zzah – 8-10pm**
The jazz group Zzah will perform at Farmer's Fury, 358 West D, Lemoore. For information, visit farmersfurywines.com.

**July 11 – Visalia Music School – 5:30pm**
The Visalia Music School will perform at Visalia First Friday, a multi-sensory art and entertainment crawl in downtown Visalia. For information, visit visaliamusicschool.com.

**July 11 – The Chop Tops & Jailbreak! – 9pm**
Sound N Vision Foundation will present Dee Jay Tucker Boy, Jailbreak! and The Chop Tops at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. Tickets for this 21+ concert are $10. For tickets and information, visit snvfoundation.org.

**July 12 – Visalia Concerts in the Park – 6-8pm**
Concerts are held at different parks throughout the city. This month's concert will be held at Soroptimist Park. The events are free. For information, call 713-4365.

# EVENTS

## July

**Through-Aug. 20 – Farmers Market at Quail Park – 10:30am-1:30pm**
Quail Park Retirement Village will host a Farmers Market every Wednesday through August 20 at 4520 W. Cypress Ave., Visalia. For information, call 624-3500.

**Through-Aug. 29 – Rockin' the Arbor – 6-10pm**
On Friday nights, Lemoore Chamber of Commerce will present Rockin' the Arbor, featuring live music, food vendors and family activities at 300 E Street. For information, call 924-6401.

**July 3, 11, 18, 25 – Downtown Dinuba Certified Farmers' Market – 5-9pm**
Local fresh fruits and vegetables, food vendors, music, games, prizes and bounce houses. For information, call 591-5940.

**July 3 – Thursday Night Market Place - Red, White & Blues Night – 5:30-9pm**
Red, White and Blues will be the Hanford Thursday Night Market Place theme. Electric Grease (blues/West Coast jump) will be the featured entertainment. Fresh produce, beer garden, live band, D.J., local vendors, kids activities and theme nights are featured every Thursday night through September in downtown Hanford. For information, visit mainstreethanford.com.

**July 3 – Woodlake July 3rd Blast**
The celebration will be held at Miller Brown Park in downtown Woodlake. Vendors, kids games, bounce houses, music and events will be featured. The evening ends with a fireworks display. For information visit woodlakekiwanis.com.

**July 3 – SHRM Ergonomics & Train the Trainer – 7:30-10:30am**
The Society for Human Resource Management of Tulare Kings will feature a speaker on professional safety, health and environmental services at the Visalia Holiday Inn, 9000 W. Airport Dr. Buffet breakfast is included. Cost is $15 members, $30 non-members. For information, call Faith Lisle at 256-5000.

**July 4 – Visalia Freedom Celebration – 7pm**
The Visalia Parks & Recreation Foundation, in partnership with the City of Visalia, will present the annual Freedom Celebration at Giant Chevrolet Mineral King Bowl. Gates open at 6:30 pm, with a fireworks presentation at 9pm. Live entertainment featuring Run 4 Cover will perform and concessions will be available. No ice chests or outside food and beverages are allowed. A donation of $3 per person is requested, however admission is free.

**July 4 – July 4 Pancake Breakfast – 7-10am**
The Fraternal Order of Eagles will host a pancake breakfast under the Exeter City Park arbor. Tickets, $5 per plate, available at the Exeter Chamber before the event or at the event.

**July 4 – Exeter Fourth of July in the Park – 7am-3pm**
Exeter will celebrate the Independence Day with activities throughout the day beginning with a pancake breakfast under the arbor, a 2-mile walk and 10k run and a horseshoe tournament. Face painting, mini-train rides, petting zoo, arts and crafts, food, live entertainment and more begins at 10 am at the Exeter City Park, Chestnut and E Streets. The Lion's Club will then hold a Fireworks display at dusk at Lions Stadium on East Rocky Hill Drive. Donations will be accepted by admission is free. For information, visit exeterchamber.com

**July 4 – Firecracker Fun Run – 7am**
The Lemoore Recreation Department will host the Annual 4th of July 3k-walk/5k run at City Park. Check-in begins at 6am. Registration is $20. After the race, the American Legion will hold a breakfast. Opening ceremonies will follow. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

**July 4 – Lemoore July 4th Celebration – 7am-2pm**
The Annual 4th of July Celebration at Lemoore City Parks kicks off with the Firecracker Fun Run at 7am followed by the opening ceremonies. Music, live entertainment, water games, bounce houses, food and craft vendors and more are featured. Admission is free.

**July 4 – Tachi Palace Firework Celebration – 5pm**
Tachi Palace in Lemoore will host a free firework celebration, mini-carnival, bounce house and live music in the outdoor pavilion. Lawn chairs and coolers are allowed, but no glass bottles or alcohol will be permitted. For information, visit tachipalace.com.

**July 5, 12, 19, 26– Visalia Farmers Market – 8-11:30pm**
Open year around, the market, corner of S. Mooney and W. Caldwell, offers fresh local produce, cooking demonstrations and entertainment. For information, visit visaliafarmersmarket.com.

**July 6, 13, 20, 27 – Back to Basics: Wilderness Skills - 10am**
Sequoia Natural History Association will host a Kings Canyon naturalist for a wildlife-spotting clinic. Meet at John Muir Lodge registration desk. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 8 – 26th Annual Tommy Elliott Memorial Golf Classic – 10am**
Kaweah Delta Hospital Foundation will host this tournament and silent auction, luncheon and reception to benefit the Labor and Delivery Unit at the Kaweah Delta Medical Center. Fees start at $175. Sponsorships are available. For information, call 624-2359.

**July 9-12 - 46th MARAC National Convention**
The Mobile Amateur Radio Awards Club will hold its national convention at the Visalia Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center. For information, visit marac.org.

**July 9 – The Seine Slide Show Presentation – 12-1pm**
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce will

# VENT CALENDAR

present "The Seine: Paris to Normandy" to highlight its upcoming trip, part of the Travel with the Chamber program. The tour includes rout rip air fair from Fresno, 30 meals, six tours of Honfleur, Normandy Beaches, Rouen, Giverny, Auvers-Sur-Oise and Paris. The presentation will be held at the Chamber office, 220 N. Santa Fe St. For travel information contact Sue Summers at the Chamber Office: 734-5876 or sue@visaliachamber.org.

**July 10 – Lunch 'n' Learn – 12-1:30pm**
The Professional Latin American Association will hold a presentation on "Leading High Performance Teams" as part of its Lunch 'n' Learn Leadership Development Series. The event is held at the KCAO Main Office, 1130 N. 11th Ave., Hanford. To reserve a seat, call Carol Hernandez at 482-7515.

**July 10 – Thursday Night Market Place – 5:30-9pm**
Fresh produce, beer garden, live band, D.J., local vendors, kids activities and theme nights are featured every Thursday night May through September in downtown Hanford. Wear Those Wranglers and Cowboy Up will be the theme. Buck Ford will be the featured entertainment. For information, visit mainstreethanford.com.

**July 11 – First Friday Downtown Visalia – 5:30pm**
July's First Friday event will be moved to July 11, since the first Friday is July 4. The multi-sensory art and entertainment crawl in the downtown Visalia will showcase musicians, performers, photographers, ports, sculptors, vendors and shop owners. The family-friendly event is free. For information, visit facebook.com/firstfridayvisalia.

**July 12 – Resource Fair – 9am-1pm**
The Tulare County Housing Resource Fair will be held at the Visalia Convention Center to provide information and assistance to people interested in becoming first-time homebuyer and families at risk of home foreclosures. Co-sponsored by the City of Visalia, the resource fair offers free financial, legal and educational resources. Representatives from businesses, government agencies and nonprofits involved in housing and home financing will be there, and there will be activities for children, as well as a raffle for adults. To become a sponsor, go online to cset.org/housingfair.

**July 12 – Throw Back Prom – 6:30-11:30pm**
Exeter Dorksmen will host its annual Throw Back Prom with the theme, "Enchantment Under the Sea." Live music, DJ, Prom Photos, Food, No Host Bar and more are featured. Tickets are $25 in advance and $30 at the event. Proceeds go to the Exeter Dorksmen Scholarship Fund. For tickets and information, call 303-8540.

**July 12, 26 – Micro Sprints – 5pm**
The best Micro Sprint drivers in the nation will face off at Lemoore Raceway, 1750 Hwy 41. For information, visit lemooreraceway.com.

**July 12 – Bunco Night – 6:30pm**
The Springville Community Club is sponsoring Bunco Night at the Springville Veterans' Memorial Building, 35944 Highway 190. The Club has already rounded up over a hundred prizes and Eagle Mountain Casino has donated $25 Bonus Cash coupons to the first 100 players. Tickets are $15 and can be purchased at the Patton House in Springville. For information, call 539-3993 between 10am and 4pm, Monday through Sunday.

**July 15 – Leadership Visalia Enrollment Deadline**
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Visalia Program is an intensive 9-month program designed to develop skills, experience and community knowledge. Applications must be submitted by July 15. For information, email Sue Summers at sue@visaliachamber.org.

# THEATER

## July

**July 15, 23 & 30 – Optimist Movies in the Park – 6pm**
Free family movies will be shown in Exeter City Park. Blankets and lawn chairs welcome. For information, call 909-2996.

**July 3 – Porterville Summer Night Lights – 7pm**
A movie in the park will be featured at Zalud Park. The free program is sponsored by Summer Night Lights. For information, visit ci.porterville.ca.us/depts/parksandleisure.

**July 4-5 & 11-12 – Moonlight and Magnolias – 7pm**
The Visalia Players take us back to the Golden Age of Hollywood in this farcical and funny production. Three matinee performances will also be held July 6 & 13 at 2pm. The Visalia Players perform at the Ice House Theater, 410 E. Race Ave. For information visit visaliaplayers.org.

**July 5 – Soylent Green**
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Science Film Series will be held every Saturday through July 19 in the Purple Room, Visalia Branch, 200 W. Oak Ave. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

**July 5-19 – Tarzan – 7:30pm**
Tarzan, based on the story by Edgar Rice Burroughs and the Disney Film, will presented at the Encore Theatre, 327 S. N Street, Tulare. Friday and Saturday shows begin at 7:30. Sunday matinees begin at 2. For tickets and information, call 686-1300.

**July 5 – Dive-In Movies – 6pm**
"Annie" will be shown at the Summer Night Lights Dive-in Movies program at Mt. Whitney High School pool, 900 S Conyer St., Visalia. The program, which runs through July 26, features free movies and swim time. The pool opens at 6pm and the movie begins at dusk. Snacks, blankets and lawn chairs are permitted. For information, visit liveandplay-

# KIDS

**Through July 25 – Sizzlin' Summer Day Camp**
Hanford Parks and Recreation will operate a summer day camp at the Teen Center, 400 N. Douty St. For information, visit ci.hanford.ca.us.

**Through July 30 – Summer Night Lights – 6:30-9:30pm**
Every Saturday Night through July 30, the County of Tulare offers Summer Night Lights, a program that aims to curb violence and other negative activity by keeping selected parks and recreational facilities open during the summer months. The Wittman Village Community Center will host the first event at 300 Pearl St., Visalia. For information, call 636-5000.

**Through Aug. 1–Valley Oak SPCA Critter Camp**
Critter Camp offers summer fun for youth ages 5-12 with activities, crafts, and guest speakers. The camp will be Monday through Friday from 9am to 1pm at Valley Oak SPCA Animal Shelter and Adoption Center, 29016 Highway 99, Visalia. Camps for ages 8-12 will be held on July 7-11, and July 14-18. Camps for ages 5-7 will be held July 21-25, July 28-August 1. To register, visit vospca.org or Valley Oak SPCA.

**Through Aug. 2 – Movies in the Park**
Movies in the Park return to Riverway Sports Park in Visalia. Movies begin at dusk and are shown on a giant screen in the new special events promenade in the park. This is a free family event. Movie schedule includes July 12th – "Vampire Academy"; July 19th – "The Avengers"; July 26th – "Gravity"; and Aug. 2 – "The Lego Movie."

**Through Aug. 8 – Porterville Summer Day Camp – 7:30am-5:30pm**
The Porterville Heritage Center is offering summer day camp for children ages 5-12. Activities, crafts, sack lunches and snacks will be provided. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Cost is $80 for full days/full-week, $50 for half days/full week; $20 full-day drop-in and $10 for half-day drop-in. A $5 discount is available for siblings of full-week participants. The center is located at 256 E. Orange Ave. For information, call 791-7695.

**Through Aug. 8 – Rockin' the Rec – 7am-6pm**
Lemoore Parks and Recreation will host weekly summer day camps for children ages 5-12. Camp is an all-day program with breakfast and lunch provided by the KCAO Food Program. Activities include arts and crafts, indoor and outdoor activities, swimming, movies, picnics and a weekly field trip. Each week has a different theme with structured events developed around the theme. Cost is $120 a week, $420 for 4 weeks; and $820 for all 9 weeks. Registration required. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

**Through Aug. 8 – The Loop Bus – 12:30-6:30pm**
A free bus is provided to youth, ages 6-17 years, to Visalia Community Recreation Centers Monday through Friday. Youth must pre-register to use the service. Call 713-4365.

**Through Aug. 8 – Kamp Kaboom – 7:30am-5:30pm**
The Whitendale Community Center is offering summer day camp for children ages 5-12. Activities, crafts, snack lunches and snacks will be provided. Registration is on a first-come-first-served basis. Cost is $100 for full week, $20 full-day drop-in and $10 for half-day. The center is located at 630 W. Beech, Visalia. For information, call 713-4365.

**Through Summer – Summer Food Rocks – 12-1pm**
A nutritional lunch is available to kids 18 years and younger Monday through Friday at Anthony Community Center, Manuel F. Hernandez Community Center and Whitendale Community Center in Visalia. Meals are free, but kids are required to eat lunch on site. For information call Visalia Parks and recreation at 713-4365.

**July 3, 11, 18, 25 – Dinuba Summer Night Lights – 7-9:30pm**
Games, music food and free activities will be held at Entertainment Plaza, 289 S. L St., Dinuba. For information, call 591-5940.

**July 5, 12, 19, 26 – Summer Night Lights – 6:30-9:30pm**
Every Saturday Night through July 30, the County of Tulare offers Summer Night Lights, a program that aims to curb violence and other negative activity by keeping selected parks and recreational facilities open during the summer months. The Visalia Boys & Girls club will host the event at 215 W. Tulare Ave. For information, call 636-5000.

**July 6, 13, 20 & 27 – Dive In Movie – 6-10pm**
Dive-In Movies sponsored by Summer Night Lights will be offered free during the summer. This family activity runs every Saturday until July 26th. The program will be held at Mt. Whitney High School Pool in Visalia. For information, visit ci.visalia.ca.us.

**July 8 – Blacklight Dance Party – 6-9pm**
Summer Night Lights will present a Blacklight Dance Party at Alpaugh School. Youth are asked to wear clothes that glow. Admission is free. For information, call 564-8055.

**July 8, 15, 22, 29 – Kindergarten Readiness Storytime – 6:15pm**
Every Tuesday, the Tulare Public Library hosts story time in the Kids' Space.

**July 9 & 16 – Splash With Us – 7-10pm**
Tulare County Board of Supervisors will present a series of swim nights at Woodlake High School pool. The events are part of the StepUp program, which offers alternative events for youth. For information, visit stepuptc.com.

**July 10 – Allensworth Swim Party – 6-8pm**
Summer Night Lights will present a Swim Party at Earlimart School pool. Admission is free. For information, call 564-8055.

**July 11 – Beat the Heat – 6-9pm**
Tulare County Board of Supervisors presents Beat the Heat with activities, games and music at Miller Brown Park in Woodlake. Free Admission. For information, call 564-8055.

**July 11, 18, 25 & Aug. 1 – Friday Summer Night Lights in Visalia – 6-9pm**
The Summer Night Lights Program, sponsored by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, includes games, music, activities, and food. Events will also be held July 11th, Rawhide Baseball Stadium; July 18th, Manuel Hernandez Community Center; July 25th, Boys and Girls Club (Tulare Ave. Location); Aug. 1, Riverway Sports Park. For information, visit stepuptc.com.

**July 11 – Summer Night Lights – 6:30-9:30pm**
The Summer Night Lights program continues at Rawhide Park. For information, call 636-5000.

**July 11 – Porterville Late Skate – 7pm**
Summer Night Lights will offer a late skate at the Porterville Skate Park, located in Veterans Park at 1501 W. Henderson. For information, visit ci.porterville.ca.us/depts/parksandleisure.

**See more events online ourvalleyvoice.com**

# COMMUNITY

## July

**Through July 18 – Lemoore High School Public Swim – 12-1:50pm**
Lemoore High School pool will be open for public swimming Monday through Friday. Cost is $2.50. A season swim pass is available for $25 or $75 Family. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

**Through July – Sharps Drop Off Days**
The new Home-Generated Sharps Waste Collection Program went into effect on July 1, and provides Tulare County residents free drop-off of their used sharps at the local retailer where they originally purchased their sharps. To launch the program, Consolidated Waste Management Authority is hosting four free drop-off events throughout the County to collect sharps from residents. Sharps will only be accepted in approved certified sharps containers. For information, visit cwmarecycles.com.

**Through July 30 – Voices of the Past – 6pm**
Travel back in time with a Sequoia naturalist to see the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks through a living history character. This one-hour presentation is held daily at Wolverton Patio of the Wuksachi Lodge. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**Through Aug. 2 – Visalia Public Swim – 12-3pm**
Monday through Saturday, the lifeguard-supervised pool at Redwood High School will be open to the public. Redwood High School is located at 1001 W Main St., Visalia. Those under age 6 must be accompanied by an individual 16 years or older. Cost is $1.50 ages 13+ years and $1.25 for ages 12 and under. Passes are also available for $20 at Anthony Community Center. The pool will be closed on July 4. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

**Through Aug. 3 – Hanford Public Pool**
Hanford Pool is open through August 3, Tuesday through Saturday from 12-4pm and Sunday from 5-8pm. The pool is located at 415 Ford St. For information, visit ci.hanford.ca.us.

**Through Summer – Porterville City Pool – 12:15-4:15pm**
The City Pool, 97 N. Park Dr., will be open Monday through Thursday through the summer. Admission: $1 children, $2 adult. Monthly pool passes, $30/adults and $20/children, are available at the pool cashier. For information, call 782-7543.

**July 3 – Downtown Scavenger Hunt – 6:30pm**
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Adult Summer Reading Program Literary Elements series continues with a Downtown Scavenger Hunt. The program meets Thursdays every week through July 24th at the Visalia Branch, 200 W. Oak Ave. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

**July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 – Flashlight Hike – 8:30pm**
A 1-hour, half-mile hike will be held by the Sequoia Natural History Association to explore the nocturnal world. Bring warm layers and a flashlight. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 – Flashlight Hike – 9pm**
The Sequoia National History Association presents a one-hour family campfire to share stories behind-the-scenes of the National Park. Dress warmly. S'more fixings are encouraged. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 4, 11, 18, 25 – Fridays for Families – 9:30am**
A Sequoia Natural History Association naturalist will talk about the natural history of the Sierra Nevada. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 4, 9, 11. 16, 20, 23, 25, 30 – Wonders of the Night Sky – 9pm**
Meet in the Wuksachi Lodge lobby for this one-hour, half-mile hike exploring the beauty and wonder of the park's protected sky. Bring warm layers and a flashlight. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 5 – Family Birding – 9am**
Sequoia Natural History Association will give a one-hour, 1-mile walking tour to identify familiar birds in the Sierra Nevada. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 5 – Community Pool Party – 12-3pm**
The Visalia Parks and Recreation is sponsoring a free pool party at Redwood High School pool, 1001 W. Main St. Those under age 6 must be accompanied by an individual 16 years or older. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

**July 5, 18 – Owl Prowl – 7:30pm**
Listen for owls during this one-hour, one-mile hike beginning at Crescent Meadow in Sequoia National Park. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 8, Aug. 12, Sept 9 & Oct. 14 – Valley Oak SPCA Yappy Hour – 5-9pm**
The Planning Mill Pizzeria will donate a portion of Yappy Hour proceeds to Valley Oak SPCA on the Second Tuesday of each month. Well-behaved, leashed pets are welcome on the patio at The Planning Mill, 514 E. Main St., Suite A, Visalia. For information, visit vospca.org.

**July 9, 16, 23, 30 – Wildlife Wednesdays – 10am**
Every Wednesday, a Sequoia naturalist hosts a one-mile wildlife spotting clinic. Hikers meet at the Wuksachi Lodge. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 9, 16, 23, 30 – Family Campfire – 7:30pm**
A family campfire will be held at Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks John Muir Lodge Lobby fireplace. A naturalist from the Sequoia National History Association will share stories behind the scenes of the national park. Feel free to bring fixings for S'Mores. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 10 – Valley Oak Quilt Guild – 10am**
The Valley Oak Guild will meet at Tulare Community Church, 1820 N. Gem in Tulare. There will be several mini workshops for learning new techniques. For information, visit valleyoakqg.org.

**July 10 – 55+ Rocks Speaker Series – 11:30am-12pm**
"Newspapers Aren't Just Print Anymore" will be the featured topic at the 55+ Rocks Speaker series at Visalia Senior Center, 310 N. Locust St., Visalia. The free program addresses topics such as health, finance, nutrition and more. Lunch reservations must be made 24-hours in advance by calling 713-4481.

**July 10 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm**
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. Doors open at 6:15 for bidders to examine auction items. The meeting begins at 7pm with the auction starting at 7:30pm. A raffle is held during each auction. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

**July 10 – Green Cleaning – 6:30pm**
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Adult Summer Reading Program Literary Elements series continues with Green Cleaning. The program meets Thursdays every week through July 24th at the Visalia Branch, 200 W. Oak Avenue. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

**July 10 – Full Moon on Moro Rock – 8pm**
Meet Sequoia Natural History Association naturalist for a one-hour discussion at Moro Rock summit. Bring warm layers and a flashlight. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 12 – Family Birding Walk – 9am**
Meet at Wuksachi Lodge Lobby in the Sequoia National Park for a Family Bird walk to identify common birds in the Sierra Nevada. For information, visit sequoiahistory.org.

**July 13 – 50+ Rocks Hiking Club – 8am-6pm**
The 50+ Rocks Hiking club will travel to The Watchtower. The program offers those ages 50 and older guided hikes and a seat on the Sequoia Shuttle. Bring a sack lunch, water and daypack. Cost is $25. Pre-registration required. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

**July 14 – Dog Obedience – 6pm**
The Lemoore Recreation Department will partner with Critter Sitters Training Academy to offer dog obedience training. Bring dogs on a leash and some treats. Classes meet Mondays for 7 consecutive weeks at the Civic Auditorium. Cost is $80. For information, visit lemoore.com/parks.

**July 17 – Stars and Stories – 6:30pm**
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Adult Summer Reading Program Literary Elements series continues with Stars and Stories. The program meets Thursdays every week through July 24th. The evening event will meet at Sam Pena Planetarium. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

**July 19 – Mensa Test – 11am-1pm**
American Mensa Chair Dan Burg will conduct the Mensa Test at the offices of the Valley Voice, 208 W. Main St., Suite E, Visalia. The fee for the proctored IQ testing session – an opportunity to find out how smart you really are – is $40 and reservations are required. For reservations or more information, email tulare-kings@sfmensa.org.

**July 24 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm**
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

**July 24 – Duffy Hudson as Albert Einstein – 6:30pm**
Tulare County Library Visalia Branch Adult Summer Reading Program Literary Elements series will host its final program with Duffy Hudson as Albert Einstein. The program is sponsored by Friends of the Tulare County Library.

**Aug. 1 – iPhones & You – 6:45-8:15pm**
Visalia Parks and Recreation is offering a workshop on advanced features of the Apple iPhone at the Visalia Senior Center. Cost is $15. Register online at liveandplayvisalia.com.

**Aug. 2 Exeter Volunteer Fire Department Poker Run**
The Exeter Fire Department Poker Run begins at Exeter Memorial Building. For information, 592-3714.

**Aug. 7 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm**
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

# ART

## July

**Through July 7 – A Show of Our Own**
The Creative Center Artists present this exhibition at the Jon Ginsburg Gallery, 410 E. Race Ave., Visalia.

**Through July 26 – Yosemite Renaissance XXIX Exhibit**
Yosemite Renaissance, an exhibit originating at the Museum in Yosemite Valley, will have its works on display at The Kings Art Center, 605 N. Douty St., Hanford. For information, call 584-1065.

**July 7-August 29– "Beauty Runs in the Family" – 10am-3pm**
The Creative Center's Jon Ginsburg Gallery will host a mother and daughter show featuring works by Milli and Lesli Pepper. An opening reception will be held at the Jon Ginsburg Gallery, 410 E. Race, Visalia, Friday, July 11, 2014 from 6-8pm. For a tour of the gallery, call 733-9329, or visit the Creative Center office at 606 N. Bridge.

**July 18-20 – Open Air Peddler's Market**
The market featuring antiques and collectibles is held at Tumbleweeds Antiques, 159 North B Street, Exeter, and at Exeter Treasures, 558 E. Palm. To reserve space or for information, call 592-1940 or 936-1487.

**July 19 – Christmas in July – 10am-3pm**
Central Valley W.O.M.E.N.'S Network presents Christmas in July at the Lamp Liter Inn in Visalia. Admission is $2, current military and immediate family are free. Over 45 vendors will have crafts and gifts to jump-start holiday shopping. Proceeds benefit CVWN Scholarship and Relay for Life. For information, visit centralvalleywomensnetwork.org.

**July 31 – Photography Exhibit Reception – 5-7pm**
The Tulare Historical Museum will host a Reception for a photography exhibit in its Heritage Art Gallery. The works of David Meyer & Richard Harrison will be on display from July 31-Sept 27. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

**Aug. 14 – Valley Oak Quilt Guild – 10am**
The Valley Oak Guild will meet at Tulare Community Church, 1820 N. Gem in Tulare. Lura Schwartz Smith will lead an informative program. For information, visit valleyoakqg.org.

**Aug. 15 – Traditionals Transformed – 10am**
The Valley Oak Quilt Guild will hold a workshop at Tulare Community Church, 1820 N. Gem in Tulare. For information, visit valleyoakqg.org.

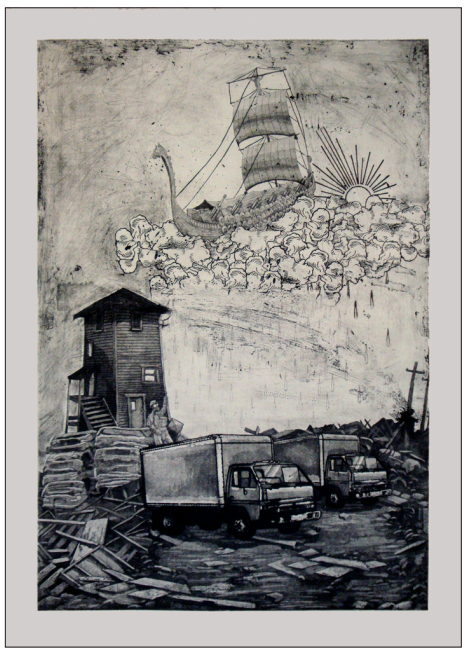
**Aug. 15-17 – Open Air Peddler's Market**
The market featuring antiques and collectibles is held at Tumbleweeds Antiques, 159 North B Street, Exeter, and at Exeter Treasures, 558 E. Palm. To reserve space or for information, call 592-1940 or 936-1487.

**Sept. 19-21 – Open Air Peddler's Market**
The market featuring antiques and collectibles is held at Tumbleweeds Antiques, 159 North B Street, Exeter, and at Exeter Treasures, 558 E. Palm. To reserve space or for information, call 592-1940 or 936-1487.

# North American Print and Drawing Exhibition Returns to Arts Visalia

**Kevin Bowman**

Returning to Arts Visalia this week is the 2014 North American Print and Drawing Exhibition. A competitive exhibition with significant cash prizes, artists from throughout the United States and Canada were invited to submit artworks for consideration for inclusion in the show. In total, 84 artists submitted 235 artworks. Forty pieces by 37 artists were chosen for the exhibition and will be featured in the exhibit at Arts Visalia through the month of July.



Matthew Hopson-Walker, "From On High Terror Strikes," (from Fresno)

Visitors will see a wide array of works in terms of technique, subject matter and artistic direction. Because we in Visalia, and the Central Valley as a whole, are somewhat isolated from the galleries and museums of major metropolitan areas, this exhibition provides our community a view of cutting-edge, original artworks. It truly is an exceptional showing of contemporary art and one that we at Arts Visalia are proud to present.

The variety of styles and approaches to making art as evidenced by the works on display is striking. Perhaps this is reflective of the fact that among today's artists there is no single overarching trend that dominates. Instead, one sees in these works everything from highly abstract, non-objective works to highly representational, photo-realist images as well as a fair number of conceptually charged, socially aware visual statements.

The juror for the exhibition, and thus the person responsible for the considerable task of reviewing each artwork submitted in order to select the works that would be included in the exhibition, was California State University Professor of Art Roxanne Sexauer. Professor Sexauer holds bachelor of fine arts and master of fine arts degrees in printmaking, having studied first with Mauricio Lasansky at the University of Iowa and later at the State University of New York at Purchase, with Antonio Frasconi. Her work has been exhibited widely throughout the United States and abroad and is included in many public and private collections. Having joined the faculty of CSU Long Beach in 1989, she teaches printmaking, drawing and the history of printmaking and drawing.

Jeannette Sirois, "Bad Hair Day #1," (from Surrey, British Columbia)

The inclusion of one's work in a juried exhibition of this scope serves to enhance an artist's resume and affords them the opportunity to compare their work to that of other artists. Similarly, visitors to the exhibition will have the opportunity to see artworks by artists they are not likely to have encountered previously, to get a sense of what professionals in the fields of printmaking and drawing are making right now.

A handful of artists with Central Valley roots had works selected for the show, including Amie and Matthew Rangel, formerly of Visalia, Laura Melancon of Woodlake, Jessica Robles and Francisco Alonso, both of Visalia, Matthew Hopson-Walker and Jessie Martinez, both of Fresno and Rogelio Gutierrez, formerly of Visalia and now a professor of art at the University of Arizona.

The exhibition will be on display through July 25th, with an opening reception to be held on the evening of Friday, July 11th from 6-8pm. Admission to both the exhibition and the reception are free and open to the public. Arts Visalia is located at 214 E. Oak Ave. in downtown, Visalia. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday from noon to 5:30pm. For more information, visit www.artsvisalia.org.

*Kevin Bowman is the director of Arts Visalia and an instructor of art at College of the Sequoias.*

# Bronco to Appear at Eagle Mountain Casino

**Staff Reports**

Eagle Mountain Casino continues its 2014 concert series with Bronco, also known as "El Gigante de America," who will return to perform an 8pm show on July 13.

Bronco is from Apodaca in Nuevo Leon, Mexico. Their modern take on the Norteno style in the '80s and '90s helped earn them a number of international hits. Band members José Guadalupe Esparza, Ramiro Delgado, Javier Villareal and José Luís 'Choche' Villareal crafted a sound that paid tribute to the Norteno tradition while incorporating modern instruments like keyboards, as well as a more melodic, pop style with elaborate costumes.

Bronco experienced international fame partly by help of their international hit "Que no Quede Huella" from their 1989 album, *A Todo Galope*, and tours that took them all over Mexico and to the United States, Puerto Rico, Spain, Argentina, Venezuela, Peru and many other countries. The band also acted in the television soap opera "Dos Mujeres un Camino," alongside Erik Estrada, Laura León, Lorena Herrera, Selena Quintanilla and Bibi Gaytán. In addition to acting, they performed the show's opening song.

Grupo Bronco has sold over 10 million albums to date. Their CD *Pura Sangre* earned gold and platinum records in Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay, as well as in Mexico. All of Bronco's albums have achieved solid sales in the United States.

After Esparza announced he was going to pursue a solo career in 1997, the group broke up. In 2003, the band members finally announced a return, and later that year, the group was reformed. They intended to use the name Bronco in Mexico again, but had a dispute over the copyrighted band name with their ex-manager, and chose to go by the name El Gigante de America, the nickname their public gave them. Despite not being able to sing as Bronco in Mexico, the group still uses the name for international concerts.

Bronco

In 2012, 'Choche' Villarreal died in Nuevo Leon, and former keyboardist and accordionist Erick Garza was kidnapped and died in Monterrey.

Tickets ($30, $40) are available at www.eaglemtncasino.com, and at the casino gift shop, (800) 903-3353.

# Symphony

Continued from p. 17

"My honors thesis at UCLA was on economic development in Africa," she explained. "When I arrived there I discovered very quickly that the non-profit world doesn't need more people who understand the problem. They need people who can implement solutions. I've spent the last 15 years developing my professional skillset so that I could be one of the people with the hard skills needed to run an organization. I chose this one, quite simply, because when I interviewed with the symphony I knew immediately that these were people I wanted to work with. A live orchestra is lovely and fun, and that's what I want to immerse myself in on a daily basis—a network of people who are committed to sharing something that is beautiful and uplifting."

When asked about her plans for the symphony, de Campos is quick to say that the future direction of the organization will be determined in close collaboration with Music Director Bruce Kiesling and the 20-member board of directors. "That said, so far there is consensus that we need to increase the organization's exposure and diversify our audience. We will be reaching out to younger audiences, expanding education programs and exploring opportunities to share what we are doing with the region's majority Latino population."

For de Campos, who previously served on the boards of the Tulare County Hispanic Roundtable and the Tulare County Latino Rotary Club, the opportunity to promote cultural exchange through music is a dream come true. A 15-year veteran of salsa dancing, de Campos is a strong supporter of Latin music and dance in the Valley.

"I first became exposed to Latin dance when I moved to Central America for a year to study Spanish," she said. "It's my passion. I have been known to get up after I've already gone to bed if someone calls and tells me about an event at the last minute. The board has made it clear that they consider my connection to this community an asset, and that's exciting."

Board President Florence Kabot is delighted that de Campos is joining the symphony. "Juliette was the clear choice. Her qualifications and experience made her the ideal candidate. Her grant writing experience should add a new dimension to our work and our budget."

Join us for Saturday Lunch
11:30 am - 2:00 pm
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FROM HENRY & THE STAFF

# Visalia Music School Offers Summer 'Music Camps'

**Jana Meyerstein**

Visalia Music School has over 20 professional musicians who instruct almost every instrument, including voice. VMS chooses teachers who demonstrate a calm, caring and patient attitude with a strong degree of professionalism.

"Our goal is for the students to enjoy their learning experience and play their instruments with confidence," said music director Amber Hilton.

The school will conduct music camps accommodating kids of all ages.

This summer, the school will again offer 1-on-1 music instruction for all ages. The school will also conduct "music camps" that will accommodate all ages – from preschool music appreciation, and girl's (8-12) rock camp, to high school rock camp. Each age will have different teachers and goals. The rock camps will mainly focus on guitar, piano, drums and vocals. The school also has a youth Mariachi Band available and always needs new members to keep this rich cultural tradition alive.

"We promise that this summer will be fun," said Dan Meyers of VMS.

Located close to the corner of Mooney Boulevard and Whitendale Avenue, the school has a 2,400-square-foot facility with ten classrooms and a state-of-the-art recording studio. Matt Sublet, recording engineer, is currently starting a Pro Tools 11 class. He is also available to record individuals and bands.

"Visalia Music School Teen Band performs at local events, and most recently at the Three River's Music Festival," said band manager Chris Hancock. Highlights of this event, which focuses on teens ages 12-17, can be seen at visaliamusicschool.com.

"We have many bands and ensembles available and ready for booking," said Jana Meyerstein, school founder.

La Sierra Military Academy now has a marching band, thanks to Angelica Zermano, Chief Andrade and Visalia Music School. They recently performed for veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War over the Memorial Day weekend. Both Randy Poland and Robert Giddings have been teaching these cadets drums and trumpet.

Visalia Music School will perform at First Friday on July 11th on Main Street. For more information, call 627-9500.

# G.T. Hurley to Perform at Mavericks Coffee House in Visalia July 18

**Staff Reports**

Mavericks Coffee House will present a 7pm performance by G.T. Hurley on Friday, July 18.

Hurley, from Big Timber, Montana has been described as a blend of Waylon Jennings and Billy Joe Shaver on the country side, with a seasoning of Tex Ritter and Wylie Gustafson (Wylie & the Wild West) on the Western music side. He explains that his songs have "elements of cowboy, blues and Southern rock that combine to form 'Outlaw Western.'" He writes songs about the life he's lived, and what he feels and observes, including "the taste of gunpowder, the smell of horse sweat and the damp dark of the hard-rock mine."

Hurley has two albums to his credit. The first, *Wild Horses*, was produced by Mavericks' "house musician extraordinaire," *Dave Stamey,* and was #1 on the top 30 album play list for Western CD's. His second CD, War Horse, was produced by Brenn Hill.

G.T. Hurley

For tickets ($25) or more information, call Mavericks at 624-1400, or stop by at 238 E. Caldwell Avenue, Visalia.

The Visalia Blue 11-Year-Old All-Stars captured first place in the Xtreme Diamond Sports Father's Day Bash in Camarillo on June 14-15. Visalia Blue defeated Newbury Park 8-0 in the championship game. The win qualifies the VYB Blue All-Stars for the Xtreme World Series in San Diego on July 19-24. Pictured above are: (bottom row, left to right) Coby Barnes, Robert Perez, Edgar Gonzalez, Mitchell Wilson, Luke Jewett, Dakota Brown; (middle row, left to right) Matt Ramirez, Colton Montgomery, Angel Valdez, Ethan Garcia, Riley Creech, Josh Elizondo, Austin Beno; (back row, left to right) Coach Josh Creech, Future All-Star Cooper Jewett, Coach Matt Jewett, Manager Frank Durazo.